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AN ADVENTURE WITH A GIANT SQUID.

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FIFTY-TWO

EXCELSIOR

STORIES FOR BOYS.

BY

G. MANVILLE FENN, H. J. A. HERVEY, CHARLES E. PEARCE,
ALICE F. JACKSON, NELLIE HOLDERNESS, GRACE STEBBINGS,
LIEUT.-COL. CUTHELL, FRANCIS LYNDE, PHIL MORE,
F. W. CALKINS, C. G. D. ROBERTS, W. M. GRAYDON,
ARTHUR E. MACFARLANE,
AND OTHER WRITERS.

EDITED BY

ALFRED H. MILES.

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P R E F A C E .

IT seems but a few months since the first issues of the Fifty-two Series were offered to the public, and now there are fifty-two volumes, containing two thousand seven hundred and four stories all in print, all selling and circulating all over the world.

When the Editor first projected the series he was told by many that young people did not care for short stories, and, though he felt quite sure of his quarry, more than one nose of tried olfactory keenness through undue elevation missed the scent. In the result the young people themselves have given answer. No series of the kind ever before attained to such widespread and continued popularity ; no books for young people were ever in more constant requisition at the public libraries. Some of the aforesaid noses have been lowered in the meantime, and their owners, looking down them, have honoured the series with the sincere flattery of imitation.

The Editor does not pretend that in initiating the series he anticipated so long a run, but he is none the less gratified that his judgment has been so emphatically endorsed by the young people who inspired his confidence.

The years that have witnessed the issue of the series have made great changes in the *personnel* of writers

and readers alike. W. H. G. Kingston, R. M. Ballantyne, George A. Henty, Thomas Archer, Captain Mayne Reid, and many others, whose stories enrich the earlier volumes, have laid down for ever the pens they wielded with so much success, and the boys and girls they delighted are now showing their appreciation of the earlier volumes which they received from their parents by presenting the later ones to their children.

The Editor cherishes the belief that this continued popularity is due to the fact that the stories he has brought together touch deeper than the mere fashion of the hour, and so lay hold upon the natural instincts and human sympathies which are not of an age but for all time.

The usual acknowledgments are cheerfully made. To the Editor's old friend George Manville Fenn, who contributed to every boys' book in the series; to H. J. A. Hervey, whose perennial supply of school stories and stories of India never fails of interest; to Charles E. Pearce, Alice F. Jackson, Grace Stebbings, and numerous others the Editor tenders his grateful thanks; also to the proprietors of the *Youth's Companion*, *Harper's Young People*, and the *New York Sun* for stirring stories from their spirited pages.

A. H. M.

Oct. 1, 1907.

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FRANCIS LYNDE.	NELLIE HOLDERNESS.
J. L. HARBOUR.	RODNEY H. BRANDON.
CHARLES E. PEARCE.	FRANK L. POLLOCK.
C. G. D. ROBERTS.	RAYMOND S. SPEARS.
LIEUT.-COL. CUTHELL.	NORMAN DUNCAN.
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A. E. MACFARLANE.	ARTHUR H. QUINN.
CLARENCE MAIKO.	CHARLES E. BENT.

AND OTHER WRITERS.

IN BOYHOOD'S DAYS.



THAT AFFAIR OF THRING'S.

BY ALICE F. JACKSON.

YOU see, it wasn't because he had much head knowledge, or anything like that : but he was such a capital chap for games all round. Such a cricketer, by Jove ! And as for football, he could knock the rest of us into cocked hats. And he had a sort of way—nothing stuck up, you know, but easy and good-natured—that made him a general favourite with the form.

Games, of course, don't do much for a fellow in after life ; and when he left college no one was much surprised to learn that the best he could do for himself was to become an under-strapper in a provincial bank.

It might have been two years after that the row about the embezzlement took place. It made a pretty stir. The papers were full of it. And we followed the case with breathless interest, because the man accused, and, indeed, found guilty, was no other than our old schoolmate, Thring ! Handsome Thring ! Good-natured old Thring ! Our crack cricketer and tip-top footballer !

He was found guilty, I said. Whether he *was* guilty no one knows to this day. He said he was not. As like as not he was the cat's paw of a cleverer hand.

The other man, however, got off scot free ; and Thring—

our poor easy-going, jolly old captain—was sentenced to five years' penal servitude at Portland.

Don't ask me who got up the idea. I couldn't tell. I know we all declared it was a beastly shame. We used to meet and whisper about it; and put our heads together, and talk mysteriously of a rescue.

Tom Payne—clever Tom Payne—had chucked Woolwich, much to his governor's disgust, and was making a scanty living on the stage.

"Laugh at me five years hence," he used to say to Jim and me. "I'm going to cut a figure in the world, I promise you."

He did. But that's nothing to do with the present story.

Jim and I were cramming for our "Little Go." We were the youngest of the party.

"If we could ship him off to America——" began Tom.

"Or the Colonies——" put in Jim.

"He could begin a new life under a new name. Five years' quarrying at Portland will do for a chap like Thring."

"And how are we going to set about it?" I asked. "One doesn't often hear of a convict escaping from Portland."

"Convict be hanged!" retorted Tom. "It's—it's beastly unfeeling to call old Thring that."

"In the eyes of the law——" I began.

"The law is an ass, according to Mr. Bumble."

"But its eye is opened wider now than in Mr. Bumble's time; and—and a convict is, I s'pose, one who's been convicted."

"Anyway, we won't call old Thring that. Great Scott! have you forgotten the football match at Yelverton?"

"And the way," said Jim, "that old Thring bowled out Ricks at Torcross?"

"He's too good, I tell you, to be quarrying at Portland."

"If you can get up a rescue, Tom," said Jim. "I'm with you, hand and glove."

And then we fell to talking of old times till our enthusiasm for Thring was worked up to a tremendous pitch.

"Hand and glove, you said," said Tom, with eager eyes.

"Jim, old chap, it'll have to be purse too."

Jim nodded. He was the moneyed fellow of the party—had always been. To a bob of ours, Jim could always out a sov. Only son, and rich widowed mother, and that kind of thing, to say nothing of a pretty income when he came of age. Without Jim—well, without Jim, Tom's plan of rescue would have been a castle in the air.

"Do you remember," said he, "that red-haired sister of Thring's? Handsomeish girl, rather."

We both remembered her.

"She applied to our manager to give her something to do on the stage. She wants to become an actress."

"Well, and what of that?"

"We must take her into our secret," said Tom. "She's safe. And besides, she'll help us."

"Oh! I bar a girl in it," said Jim.

"You won't when I unfold my plan," retorted Tom. "And she's an actress to her finger tips. Sensible sort of girl, and no nonsense. And, poor soul! she thinks the world of Thring. Yes," added Tom, speaking his thought out aloud, "she would be the landlady, or, better still, a sort of working housekeeper."

We stared at him.

"Landlady!" said Jim.

And I added, "Working housekeeper!"

"We must be on the spot, you know," said Tom, "and we'll rent one of those little empty cottages. Have you chaps, either of you, ever been to Portland Isle?"

Neither of us had.

"I have," said Tom, "several times. I used to visit an aunt of mine who lived at Weymouth. Heaps of visitors go to Portland to see the Chesil Beach. We shall be so much interested in the wonderful pebbles that we shall rent a house there."

"With Thring's sister as a sort of working housekeeper?"

"Yes," said Tom. And repeated dreamily, "With Thring's sister as a sort of working housekeeper."

We were so staggered that we held our tongues, and waited breathlessly till his dream was over.

"She will be middle-aged, of course, and slightly grey. She might limp a little, I can't tell yet. And to be slightly deaf would be a great advantage."

Silence still. Until I burst out: "And how will you make this young girl old?"

"Don't be an ass, Jack," and Jim gave me a shove. "Tom's an actor, and so is Miss Thring. They know how to do these things upon the stage."

"Upon the stage," I said. And repeated sarcastically, "Yes upon the *stage*!"

"And off the stage too," said Tom, coming out of his dream. "I won't tell you any more till I've seen Miss Thring."

The next time we saw Tom we found him in a state of subdued excitement. He had seen Miss Thring. She had cried at first. Cried for joy, it seems. And then she had wiped her tears away, and put ten pounds into Tom's hand.

"She is anything but rich, poor thing!" said Tom. "But she wouldn't hear of Jim's financing the whole business. Sent him her grateful thanks and is already practising for the working housekeeper."

We were again staggered. Too tongue-tied to speak, we waited humbly for Tom.

"Curiously enough she knows something of the island, and poor Thring has been to Portland on two or three occasions. They used to visit an old nurse there as children. To-morrow she will start for the place in her new character—name, Miss Jenkins—and will try to get a suitable cottage for the summer. She is middle-aged, as I told you before, and will talk of me as her young master. When she is ready for me I shall often go to spend a day to explore the Chesil Beach. I am an idle fellow, and rather eccentric, and sometimes I shall bring with me a couple of young friends. She says she knows how to cook mutton chops."

We were staggered again until Jim found courage to ask:

"How old is this middle-aged lady?"

"She is two years older than Thring," answered Tom, "which would make her between twenty-two and twenty-three."

I know Jack thought her sweet seventeen or some rotten age like that. Nothing of the sort. She's a capable, sensible young woman."

"Go on," pleaded Jim, as Tom paused with the old dreamy look.

"Her chief aim will be to get into communication with Thring. To let him know somehow that she's there, that we are there too, and that we're working for him."

"But how?" gasped Jim.

"There are various ways," Tom pondered. "Bribery is one of them. Great Scott! money can do a good deal in this world."

"I can let you have twenty pounds now," said Jim. "And more in about a fortnight."

"You're a brick, Jim," said Tom, shaking him by the hand.

"If a sov. would help," I began sheepishly.

"Thanks, Jack, you're another," said Tom, and putting his hand out for the coin immediately pocketed it.

"And—and are we to be disguised too?"

"On no account. You and Jim will have to be your natural selves."

I breathed a sigh of relief. "And you?" I asked.

"I shall wear a moustache," said Tom. "High collar; and, perhaps, an eye-glass. There's a stiffish lot to think about."

There was indeed.

When we saw Tom next his excitement was not subdued. He had heard from Portland.

"Would you believe it?" he said. "The cottage that their old nurse used to occupy was empty, and Thring's sister applied for it directly. She got it, too. I'm off to-morrow to see about the furnishing."

It was hard work cramming for our "little go." Jim said he thought he'd fail. We fished out old tales about convicts escaping from prison; and read a long account in the paper about a Prince-Town man in a mist.

"Do they have mists at Portland, Tom?" asked Jim.

"Fogs!" said Tom. "The very dickens of a sea fog. I've seen it lie in heavy wreaths across the harbour wrapping the island in a thick white veil." He was quite poetical.

The cottage was furnished—such is the power of "the ready"—and Miss Jenkins established therein. And the day came at last when we were asked to visit it.

The train from Weymouth ran along the Chesil Beach, and landed us at the station, where we were met by Tom—Tom with a tremendous moustache, high collar, and an eye-glass all complete. He looked splendid.

"How do, my dear fellows?" he said. Even his voice was changed. Fact is, we wouldn't have known him if he hadn't addressed us first.

He led us up a stony road, very steep and very grey, past the quarries with its "Thud! thud! thud!"

"Great Scott!" cried Jim, and turned a pallid face. "What's that noise?"

"The sound of the picks," said Tom.

"And Thring?" There was horror in his eyes.

Tom nodded.

We were silent. But not the "Thud! thud! thud!"

Such a stony place I never saw—grey and drear. The town was grey; and on its outskirts stood a cottage—one of many.

Tom's knock was answered by an elderly woman in a plain black gown and large white apron. He called her Jenkins.

There was a kitchen, and a parlour, and a sort of scullery behind, and two bedrooms up above. There was a pipe-rack in the parlour, and some fishing-tackle in the room, and one or two sporting pictures on the walls. The snuggerly of an idle man. It was here we ate our mutton chops.

Jenkins had a very pleasant face. She waited on us. She had soft grey hair, and wore pale blue spectacles; her mouth was sad. Jim embarrassed her by jumping up to open the door. He was a polite fellow. She persisted in

calling him Sir. She also left her h's out, and was faulty in her grammar.

Up in the bedroom was a locked cupboard. Jenkins opened it at her master's order. In it was a suit of Thring's; shirt, collar, tie, stockings, pair of brown leather shoes. A wig of dark brown hair, and false moustache—everything in readiness for him.

"The chief bother is to get rid of their clothes," whispered Tom. "The uniform is so conspicuous. Once in here the disguise would be complete."

Jenkins sighed.

"Have you," said Jim—"have you made any advance?"

"Yes," she whispered. "I am in communication with him. He knows I am here at the old place."

"But how?" gasped Jim. "How? . . . Who? . . . I don't understand."

"I have been obliged to take one other into our secret; but never mind about that now. The power of money is wonderful," she added; "and I thank you with all my heart."

It was the first time she didn't leave her h's out. It made Jim blush.

"And you don't feel frightened here? Or lonely? Or hard-worked?" he added, thinking of the mutton chops.

Her mouth quivered. "If you haven't a sister who would do as much for you, I pity you."

"I haven't a sister," muttered Jim; "worse luck. And—and," he hesitated. Then he turned to Tom. "When Thring's sister wants more money she must let you know at once."

Great Scott! The power of money in this world *is* wonderful. I blushed as I thought of my sov.

Tom took us to see the Chesil Beach, and talked. Talked loud when there was any one near enough besides ourselves to hear.

"One of the most extraordinary ridges of pebbles in Europe," says he, "and the longest, too, I believe."

Then in another tone: "If fellows like us are seen walking in

and out of Jenkins's cottage, no one would be curious if another gentleman appeared. Our hope rests on one of those dense sea-fogs. Fellows *can* make a dart from the quarries at those times, and often do ; but they're always captured again. No place to go to, and nowhere to change their clothes. With Jenkins ready, as she tells me, night and day I read that the base is formed of a mound of blue clay which is covered to the depth of five or six feet by a coat of these smooth round pebbles, so loose that a horse's legs sink almost knee-deep at every step." He stroked his moustache. The acting part he enjoyed more than the reality, I think.

Well, Jim supplied the funds, and Jenkins's young master ran over often for the day. Sometimes Jim or I would accompany him singly, other times both together. We went on sunny days, and went in dense sea-fogs. And the weeks crept slowly by.

Jenkins's mouth grew sadder and sadder. She must have been tired of cooking chops.

And then

Well,

"Be the day weary, or be the day long.
At length it ringeth to evensong."

Not quite as appropriate as it might be, but it points to my meaning. And it was just the time of evensong, judging from the Weymouth Church bells.

We were on our way there, and, as Tom put it, "There was the very dickens of a fog on."

Portland was lost in a white watery mist, which grew denser every minute. It was like trying to see things through a white muslin veil.

The train was creeping along the Chesil Beach, when the boom of a gun knocked all the colour out of Tom's face—actor as he was. Jim leapt to his feet and thrust his body out of the window, but couldn't see anything. Then he turned to us, and we looked into each other's white faces.

We were not alone in the carriage. "One of them convicts

has got loose," said a fat woman with a market basket on her lap. "That was the gun you heard!"

"Great Scott!" The ejaculation came from me. I was the only one of our party capable of using his voice. It gave Tom time to recover his.

"You don't say so, madam!" says he. "Dear me! what a terrible thing!"

"Don't you be afraid," answered our fat fellow-traveller. "They ketches 'em quick as quick."

It was a relief when the train ran into the station and we had rid ourselves of her.

Still we none of us spoke. I think we all prayed.

Says Tom at last, "Mind you, it may not be Thring!" His voice was husky.

"Pray God it may be," says Jim. "Think of his sister."

We hurried along, watching with beating hearts the little groups of people gathering together and chattering.

"It's one of them convicts got loose!"

Good heavens! How their shrill voices thrilled through and through us!

Thrings sister was near her open door, hurriedly drawing her neighbours away from it. "Oh! sir," says she to Tom, as soon as she spied us, "they say one of them prisoners is loose."

"So I hear, Jenkins," says Tom. "I hope that won't prevent you getting some tea for us."

It was a good excuse to break away from them. And we all entered together. Jim shut the door.

"May God help him if it is he! And if it is not he, God help him too," moaned Thring's sister.

We left her and went out by the back door into the little garden behind, and peered through the dense fog at the stretch of waste land beyond.

Would Thring remember the place? Would he find his way to it in the fog?

I heard Jim praying.

Said Tom: "Perhaps we'd better go out amongst the people. Perhaps"

"Hark!" said Jim, clapping his hand upon Tom's mouth. We listened, breathless.

"I heard a sound," said Jim: "a sound like some one breathing." And, creeping to the edge of the garden, we heard him whisper, "Thring!"

A dark shadow rose up. It had been grovelling under the low wall. "Who spoke?"

"Jim."

We helped him over the wall—a panting creature in a convict's dress.

It was Thring.

"Here be some of the guards coming down the road," was shouted from the street.

"Hurry," said Tom. "There's not a moment to lose. Everything is ready."

Jenkins was amongst us. We had none of us seen her come. She was quite calm. "There's a can of hot water upstairs to wash his face," she said. "Help him. I must be preparing the tea."

I suppose no one in his life was ever dressed as soon as Thring. And Tom, needless to say, arranged his wig, and stuck on the false moustache.

And then we four strolled out into the street and mingled with the excited people.

"Lost one of your men, have you?" asked Tom. The question was addressed to the guards.

"Yes, sir," answered one of them. "Chap in the quarry this afternoon got clean away in the fog."

Said a gentlemanly young fellow with brown hair and a long moustache, "Any chance of his getting away, guard?"

"Not a ghost of it," grinned the guard. And he civilly touched his hat.

But he did.

A SCHOOL COMEDY.

“Where ignorance is bliss ’tis folly to be wise.”

BY H. J. A. HERVEY.

I WAS about fourteen years of age, and fairly tall at that, and had just been put to school at Millingham, a city in the south-west of England. We were new comers, from Westmoreland, and now lived five miles out in the country near the village of Pritton, where my father, a retired Indian civilian, had bought property. He christened the place Khaishkotee (my own home), and we had been settled down there for a month when I met with the following adventure. Pritton was on a branch line of rail, and I travelled to and from Millingham with a season ticket. I soon made a number of school friends among the chaps of about my own age, and being somewhat of a spoilt boy, as most only sons are, I was allowed to invite chums, whenever I chose, to pass the week-ends at Khaishkotee.

It was in the height of summer, soon after my joining the College, that the doctor announced that there would be no school on the following Monday, as the Prince of Wales was to attend a public function in the county town and some of the parents wished their sons to be present. With the consent of mine I took home three boarders—named Naylor, Collett, and Winkler—for the week end, and arranged with the doctor to allow several others who were not going to attend the function to come over by an early train on the Monday morning for a game of cricket. Unfortunately there was no even ground anywhere near our house, or at any rate even

enough for cricket, and so on the arrival of the other boys from school we set out on a voyage of discovery.

"We may discover a giant's castle," laughed Winkler.

"Or a jabberwock," added Collett, "'whiffing through the tulgey wood';" and so, merrily chaffing, we set off in search of a pitch.

Crossing the quiet high road we entered a thick wood covering some low hills which seemed to extend for miles to the north. On reaching the summit of the first hill we took a look round. Behind lay Pritton, Khaishkotee, and other buildings, but to the north, in our front, except the chimney pots of a large house showing above the trees on the flat top of a distant hill, no signs of human habitation met the eye.

"The giant's castle!" I cried, pointing to the chimney; "I vote we make straight for it."

"Yes," added Naylor, "we may find a bit of level ground up there."

We shoved on through the silent, pathless woods without meeting a soul, or seeing any signs of people. At last we reached the foot of the hill; but not till we had climbed it did we get a proper view of the house. It stood on a level plateau, enclosed by a high wall, after following which for a short distance we came to a huge iron gate; its rusty condition and the weedy roadway passing through showing it was not used. The tall bars ended in sharp spikes; a heavy padlocked chain fastened the two wings, and the high wall was topped with broken glass. We stopped and gazed between the bars to see a large, park-like place surrounding a big, gloomy-looking house, all the doors and windows, so far as we could see, being fitted with iron gratings. The grounds were laid out with lawns and flower beds, while on some of the many garden benches sat a number of fellows; others strolled listlessly about, and one old chap chased a butterfly with a small net. All were grown-up men, some elderly, some quite old.

"I wonder who they are?" I murmured.

"It may be a hotel," remarked Naylor.

"Funny, to have a hotel out here, and strange that they should all be men," said Collett.

"There may be women and children inside. But come on, there's a bit of level ground over there, so let's have a knock ; no fun staring at those people."

We pitched our stumps, and had been playing perhaps for five minutes when some one called "Halloa, you !" in a low voice. Looking round we saw a group of men on the inner side of the gate, and many hands beckoning to us. We ceased play and went towards them.

"I say, who are you?" eagerly inquired a grey-headed man, "busy bees?"

"Millingham College boys," I answered.

"Playing cricket, aren't you?" asked the same chap, who appeared to be spokesman.

"Yes."

"We should dearly love to play too, but we are not allowed to in here."

"What place is this?" asked Winkler.

"One of His Majesty's private palaces, and we are all confined here for political crimes of various sorts."

We felt startled ; it was something new to be jawing with conspirators and perhaps dynamitists through the iron bars of a gate.

"What crimes?" I demanded in an excited whisper, for by now we had become interested ; "what did you yourself do?"

"I sneezed as the King was passing through Hyde Park, and so got shut in here for life," he replied gravely.

We stared at him, thinking that he was trying to humbug us, and I should have told him so, had not Collett—the oldest and cleverest of us—muttered, "Quite possible ; such a thing might be called *Lèse Majesté*, or High treason."

"And who are you?" presently asked Winkler.

"I am the Rajah of Bhong : not the one you see in the 'Country Girl,' but the real Rajah, from under the Himalayan deodars."

"Skittles, you are white !" blurted Naylor angrily.

"I have changed colour since coming to England for the King's Coronation. But look here, what about cricket?"

"Shall we pass you in our things?" I asked, pitying them.

"No, that would never do: the governor would treacle our hair if he saw us. Couldn't you boys scale this gate?"

"Yes, I think so."

"Very well. The governor and the chief members of his staff have gone to attend the reception of the Prince of Wales, hop over and we'll show you what cricket is."

Well, after passing the kit through the bars we climbed the gate, but with much difficulty, and at the risk of getting stuck on the spikes: none but schoolboys or monkeys could have accomplished such a feat. No sooner were we inside than the prisoners hustled us off to the left, where there was an open space screened from view from the house.

"Now, Lord Lieutenant!" cried the Rajah to one of those who had followed; "if you don't clear out with the idlers, I'll get the Governor to take away your picture books!"

"And stop your Sunday pudding!" added another, cocking a "snook" at the Lord Lieutenant, who immediately slunk off with the non-players, "or treacle your hair," said a third, who turned out to be the Lord Mayor of London.

It seemed funny to us that one should be called Lord Lieutenant, but we were fairly staggered when the Rajah now introduced his men.

"Who is your Captain?" he asked.

Collett shoved me forward, whereupon the Rajah made me a low bow, which I returned.

"I am Captain of my side," said he; "kindly name your players."

I did so, pointing to each.

"Thank you. You know who I am, an oriental ornamental eastern potentate. These are the Kaiser, Messrs. Asquith, Wyndham, Labby, Darwin, Stead, General Booth, Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joe Chamberlain," pulling each forward as he named him!

We gaped, and I think should have stampeded had not

Labby said, "All nicknames, young gentlemen: we really are nobles, in here for our political opinions; so it would never do to disclose our high rank—would it?"

This partly reassured us; we pitched wickets—and tossed, I won; but to our amazement the other side objected angrily, and insisted on taking first innings!

The Rajah and Kaiser went in, and I was about beginning to bowl when some one came running from the house. He was a young man, and looked very astonished. Grabbing my arm he led me aside; our chaps flocked up.

"Speak low!" he whispered; "who are you fellows? and how did you get in?"

"Millingham College boys: we climbed the gate; these gentlemen invited us to play them a game at cricket."

"Hum, hum!" he grunted, glancing uneasily about him; "but the mischief is done; hang old Tuppett! why was he not on the look-out? However, be careful what you do," he added; "give in to them, and slope as soon as you can. There'll be a rumpus if you're found here when the boss returns, and if I stay now 'twill only make matters worse."

"Well, Mr. Mobbs!" sang out the Rajah, from the other wicket, "how much longer are you going to delay our game?"

"Not a minute, your highness, not a minute!" bawled Mr. Mobbs; "I thought I'd tell these young bumpkins to treat you all with proper respect. Good-day, your highness! Good-day, my lords!" and lifting his bowler he cut away.

Again I hesitated; evidently my chums were also in a funk, and I had half a mind to sing out to Mr. Mobbs and beg him to see us safely out; but he had vanished, and as the men now began shouting at us to play, I ordered the fielders back to their places, and sent up my first ball: it hit the Rajah on his padless shin, whereupon he threw down his bat and commenced hopping about in a most comical manner. I was at the point of laughing outright when the Kaiser, the batsman at my end, caught me by the shoulder and shook me.

"You young imp!" he growled, "how dare you strike a crowned head in that fashion?"

"I didn't strike his head, it was his shin," I retorted ; "besides, it was quite by accident."

"I am glad, though, that you did it by accident ; but I'm afraid he won't give you any of the custard. Do you know what I've done?" he asked, now whispering confidentially and winking at me.

"What?"

"Told the under cook to put some bay leaves into the custard ! The others know nothing about it, so won't the flavour be a pleasant surprise !"

Here one of them bowled to the Kaiser, "You royal German sausage ! can't you see that the Rajah has recovered, and is prepared to face another throw from that red-head ?"

"Go-to, you arch-traitor !" responded the Kaiser loftily ; "had I you in sausage-land I would convert you into one ! Excuse his rudeness in calling you red-head," he added : "he is Stead, a friend of Kruger."

"And so are you—aren't you?" queried Fillman—who stood near : he knew a good deal about the war because his two elder brothers were in the Imperial Yeomanry out there.

"What do you mean, sir?" demanded the old man, threateningly, of Fillman, who prepared to scoot.

"Didn't you send him a telegram, telling him to buck up?"

"Oh, pooh ! that was merely to throw dust in the eyes of Europe ; besides, I must have a finger in every pie."

"Now then, play up !" shouted the spectators, squatted under the trees.

The Rajah managed to play my next ball and sent it plump into Barrie's hands, and he would have been a duffer to refuse it.

A silence ; then the Rajah said, "I'm out—I suppose?"

"Yes," replied Collett, who kept wicket.

The men under the tree jumped to their feet, rushed on to the pitch and surrounded Barrie ; we closed up too.

"Little boy," cried one, catching Barrie by the ear, "do you know what you have had the impertinence to do?"

"What have I done?" returned Barrie boldly.

"You have caught a crowned head!"

"I caught a ball, not a head: we are playing cricket, and I did only what was right."

"I am Joe Chamberlain," put in an old fellow, "and in my capacity of Prime Minister-to-be of England, I say your doing so *is* a piece of impertinence."

"I am Winston Churchill," bawled another, "and without going into the question of impertinence on this boy's part, I say *you* are impertinent, Joe Chamberlain, for styling yourself Prime Minister-to-be of England: you'll never attain that position—I shall!"

"Oh, stow your quarrelling, you British Jackasses!" said a tall old chap; "I, Roosevelt, President of Uncle Tom's Cabin, command you! Let's go on with the game."

Ultimately the Rajah gave up his bat, and Mr. Wyndham came in. He was a younger man, and made some runs. Presently the Kaiser was bowled, and it took us all we knew to avoid a squabble; but when Asquith came in, and Ellis caught him out, they lost all command over themselves, and simply screeched at us. Asquith was evidently popular, and how the quarrel would have ended I cannot say, but in the midst of the excitement Mobbs, doubling up, shouted at the top of his voice, "The Governor! the Governor! he's returning! I see the drag coming up the road! a little bird must have told him! Let these boys go, or your pudding will be stopped as sure as a gun! Let go, let go!"

The effect was wonderful: almost before Mobbs ceased bawling the men dropped us and sneaked off towards the house like so many beaten dogs!

"Now—you chaps!" whispered Mobbs breathlessly, "be off over the gate before they twig the cheat! I expected something of this kind directly I saw you here, and having no one to back me properly I didn't interfere, hoping that the beggars would behave themselves; but they always take advantage when the boss goes out, and if I peach against them they make it unpleasant for me—I can tell you. Be off

over the gate as fast as you can, or they'll give you beans if they catch you again !”

Picking up our kit, we scurried to the gate, clambered frantically over, and, without once looking back, plunged into the woods and streaked it for Khaishkotee.

We were all rather ashamed of the whole affair, and on the way decided to say as little as possible to my parents about it. They asked why we had returned so soon : I explained that the fellows we went to play did not understand cricket, and were rough so we dropped the game. Unfortunately Ellis, in climbing hurriedly over the gate, rather severely scratched his leg against one of the spikes, and this wound ultimately gave us away.

On the following day, after morning school, our Head, the Revd. Mr. Carmichael, called me to his study, where I found Ellis (who was in the form below me), and his class master.

“Lumsdon,” commenced his reverence, “Mr. Fenn, being unable to gather from Ellis how he came by the wound in his leg, has brought him to me, but he persists in refusing to tell : he is evidently determined not to implicate you. I suspect that he got into some mischief while spending the holiday and week-end at your father's house. Perhaps you can explain.”

I saw no escape, so resolved to speak out, and of course owned up.

Mr. Carmichael and the class master laughed heartily. “Now look here, Lumsdon,” continued the Head, regaining his gravity, “do you boys mean to say that you did not suspect where you had got to, and who you were playing cricket with ?”

“No, sir.”

“Well, the ‘prison’ is nothing more than an asylum for the insane : your opponents were lunatics, but fortunately for you not of the more dangerous class ; and when I ask myself how you lads, well in your teens, and with your wits about you, could have been so dense as not to make the discovery at the very first glance, I am inclined to class you with the ‘Rajah of Bhong’ and his crew !”

A SCHOOL TRAGEDY.

BY MAUD HEIGHINGTON.

“COME on, Roger, Hal and I are going through Westbro’ woods, and home by the cliffs.”

“All right, go on.”

“Aren’t you coming, old chap?”

It was Saturday afternoon, and a half holiday at Denborough School. All the boys over twelve years of age were allowed out of bounds, in twos and threes—between two and six o’clock—and the twin brothers, Roger and Theodore Winchcomb, with the chum they shared between them, as they shared most things, usually rambled off together.

The brothers were physically much alike, but otherwise very different; Roger being of a grave, steady disposition, Theodore thoughtless and mischievous, though, like his brother, the soul of honour, and naturally kind-hearted.

“I can’t come to-day, Tedo—I must write home. You know it’s the Mater’s birthday on Monday; besides, I must get my prep. done, as it’s choir-practice night. Aren’t you going to write home?”

“Oh, yes, to-morrow. Goodbye,” and Theo ran gaily off to join his friend.

It was a glorious afternoon, and the boys thoroughly enjoyed their ramble through the woods, which were already carpeted with primroses. Not that they paid much attention to the flowers, for birds’ nests interested them more, and in hunting for these they strayed from their usual beat and had gone some miles past the road leading to the cliffs before they discovered their mistake.

"Great Scott!"

"What's up?"

"Why, we must have come three or four miles from the cliff road, and I believe I see Crazy Bill's hut, down there, through the trees."

"Who on earth is Crazy Bill?"

"Oh, a queer half-silly creature. The fellows say he lives all alone and hates boys like poison," said Hal, who had been at school longer than Theo, and knew most of the traditions of the place.

"Hates boys, does he? Let's bait him a bit, then. Come on." And they set off at a run.

On a small clear space stood a tiny cottage, or more correctly, a hovel. Here Crazy Bill had lived for years with his old mother, until her death in the previous winter, since which he had occupied it alone.

The tumbledown door of the hovel stood wide open, but there was no one in sight. So after looking and listening for a few seconds, Theo cautiously tiptoed up to the open door.

Peeping in, he saw a huge ungainly form stretched on a rough wooden settle. The man had apparently been smoking, for an old wooden pipe had dropped from his now wide-open mouth, and he was snoring vigorously, while the afternoon sunshine streamed through the broken, dirty window full in his face.

Turning to Hal, who had followed him, and was looking over his shoulder, Theo laid his finger on his lips, and taking a stout piece of string from his pocket, closed the door silently.

He tied one end of the string to the handle of the door, making the other fast round an old clothes-post near by.

"What a pity we can't stay and see the fellow wake and try his door," said Hal. "What a jolly wax he'll be in!"

But Theo had every intention of seeing the game through.

"In for a penny, in for a pound," he said. "We shall be back late anyhow, and have to do 'imps,' so we may as well finish our fun." And taking his knife from his pocket, he cut a long straight switch from a hazel bush which grew near.

"I'll rouse him," he said, "and then we'll make for those trees and hide. Come and see me tickle him up, only be ready to scoot the second he stirs."

Creeping softly to the window, he found no difficulty in reaching Bill with the tip of the switch he had just prepared. He seemed to be sleeping very soundly, however, or perhaps he had not a very sensitive skin, and Theo, getting bolder, at length gave him a rough poke with it close to his eye.

Starting up with a howl, the man strode to the window just in time to see the boys disappearing behind the trees.

"Ye young warmints! Wait till I ketches ye! I'll warm up those skins o' yourn!" And snatching up a thick stick, he lifted the latch of the door.

Yells of delight from the boys, and their derisive shouts only served to increase his rage.

A vigorous tug soon broke the string, and he stood in the doorway, glaring fiercely round in search of his tormentors, who by this time had provided themselves with ammunition in the shape of fir-cones.

"Hist," said Theo, peering cautiously out from his hiding-place, "he's got a pretty thick stick, I shouldn't care to have him come too near."

"Wait till he turns his back," said Hal, "and then shy straight." But at that moment Bill stooped to pick up a stone, and thinking it too good an opportunity to be lost, each boy flung his missile with full force.

As it happened, Bill moved an instant too soon, and as he raised himself met them full in the face.

The boys darted back to the shelter of their trees—but not before Bill had seen them. With a yell of rage and pain, he rushed after them, brandishing his stick, and vowing all kinds of vengeance.

"Quick, Theo, quick!" said Hal, who was the first to realise that the matter was past a joke, and clutching his friend's arm he pulled him toward a path which led away from the cottage, and which he noticed sloped downwards, as if it led to the sea.

His surmise was correct. After a gentle and winding descent it skirted the coast for a short distance. This part of the shore was quite unknown to the boys, but as the part near Denborough abounded in caves and fissures, they hoped that they might soon find a place in which they could hide, and elude their pursuer.

They were both good swift runners, and had good staying powers, but Bill had longer legs, so that he kept pace with them.

Suddenly, after passing a rather sharp curve in the path, which hid them for a short time from their pursuer, they were brought to a standstill.

A few yards in front of them a large rock blocked their course causing the path to come to an abrupt end. Fortunately for them, however, about three feet from the ground there was an opening sufficiently large to admit them one at a time. If they could only reach it quickly enough, they might either hide, or keep the man at bay for a time, for even if not very roomy, it would surely be better to be found there than in the open, where that thick stick could have free play.

Theo reached the rock first, and, scrambling up, turned to help Hal, who had just drawn up his legs as Bill turned the corner.

"We're trapped here!" panted Hal, as he glanced round. The cave was not large, but roomy enough to allow them to keep out of reach of the man's stick—unless he could manage to enter too.

"Come as far back as you can,—perhaps he'll give up and go back, if he doesn't see us," said Theo. But no! The heavy steps came lumbering on and presently the angry face appeared at the aperture, as the man stood growling out threats of vengeance.

"I've got ye now, and I'll keep ye too," he roared; and forthwith began to climb in after them, but, being much broader in the shoulders than the boys, he found this a difficult matter.

By this time, both Hal and Theo felt thoroughly frightened, calling to mind all sorts of stories they had heard of half-witted people and their doings.

They gripped each other tight, and watched him wriggle his shoulders into the narrow space, until he suddenly came to a full stop—voice and movement ceasing simultaneously.

"He's stuck!" whispered Hal.

"Hush! Don't make him more angry."

A minute passed; still no movement or sound.

"Why doesn't he speak?"

"Or go back?"

Continued silence.

Overhead a narrow crack in the rock admitted sufficient light—now that they had become accustomed to the dimness of the cave—to show the boys that the man's eyes were open and apparently staring at them.

They gripped each other closer, both fascinated by that fixed stare, and neither daring to move an inch.

How long they stood thus neither of them knew, until Theo suddenly whispered, in awestruck tones:

"I say, Hal, I believe he's dead!"

"I don't know. Whatever shall we do?"

"It seems to me the light is going—I wonder what time it is?"

"Past six o'clock," said Hal, pulling out his watch.

"They've done calling over, then. I wonder if they will come and look for us?"

"Not yet, anyhow, and it will be long enough before they look here when they do begin, I expect."

"I say, Hal, how awful if we have to stay here all night, with that dead chap staring at us all the while." And Theo, shaking in every limb, crept closer to his friend.

"Yes, it is horrible! I wish Roger had come with us, we shouldn't have got into this fix then."

"No, indeed! Old Roger is such a steady fellow, and besides he would have said it was cruel to plague a half-crazy man."

"Well, I guess it was. Oh! why didn't we stop to think?"

"I'm awfully hungry, Hal."

"So am I, but we shall be worse before we get out, I expect."

"Do you think we could push him out of the way? If he's dead he can't hurt us."

"No, but how horrid to push a dead man about. Still, I suppose it is better than staying here all night. Let's each take a shoulder and push."

After a few moments' hesitation they agreed to do this, and each placed his hands on a shoulder of the massive body which blocked the entrance of the cave. But though both boys pushed with all their might, the huge ill-shapen form did not move an inch; the fact was his bent elbows were hitched against the rock in such a way as to make it impossible to move his body from inside the cave.

"It's no good!" said Hal, at last. "We must wait! Ugh! It really is horrible. Let's get as far away from it as we can. It will be quite dark soon."

There was a decided quaver in Hal's voice as he threw his arms round Theo; who, though not by any means a coward, was now trembling all over.

"Oh! those eyes!" he said. "I shouldn't mind half so much, Hal, if we hadn't plagued him."

There, at the back of the cave, crouched the two boys in the gathering darkness, talking over their chances of escape, or prolonged imprisonment and even slow starvation.

Hour after hour passed, seeming like weeks to the prisoners.

"It must be past bedtime," said Theo at length. "Of course they are out looking for us. Oh dear! This is so much farther out than we generally come. Will they ever find us?"

"Well, we must hope for the best; and I say, Theo, if we were back at school we should have said our prayers at bedtime, suppose we just say them now."

Kneeling down, the two boys said their usual prayers, each adding a special petition for deliverance from what they feared might prove a living grave.

"That makes one feel much more comfortable, doesn't it?"

"Yes; I'm so glad we thought of it. Are you sleepy, Theo?"

"No, I am too cold and hungry; and I cannot help thinking how awful it will be if they never find us. You know Roger thought we meant to take the cliff-path home, by Fenton's Cave, and they won't think of coming so far as this."

In the meantime, the boys had been missed at six-o'clock calling over, but as it was not an unusual thing for boys to return a little late, their names were set down for the usual imposition, and no anxiety felt on their account. When, however, after tea and choir-practice Roger found that they had not returned, he reported the matter at once to a monitor, who went with him to the Head-master.

After careful inquiries as to the direction the boys had proposed taking, a search party, consisting of masters and monitors, was quickly organised—Roger being included at his own earnest request. They divided into two sections—one part going through the woods, and the rest following the cliff-path along the shore.

Calling, and searching with lanterns every hole and cavern, the two parties at length met by Fenton's Cave—only to report utter failure.

Roger, now white as a sheet, looked piteously at the Head-master.

"Cheer up, old fellow," said Denton, a sixth-form boy, putting his arm round Roger. "We shall find them all right; but you ought to go home to bed, you look quite knocked-up."

"Oh, no, indeed I couldn't sleep. I must stay and search with the rest." And Roger listened eagerly to the plans for a further search.

It was now arranged that half the party should continue along the cliffs past Fenton's, and the other half still keep to the woods—but that all should meet again at Fenton's at 2 A.M., if no clue were found. And accordingly, when two o'clock came, the whole party reassembled, looking utterly fagged and jaded.

"We must go back now," said Dr. Knollys, "get what sleep we can, and resume the search to-morrow morning."

All the school was up early that morning, and after despatching telegrams to the fathers of the two boys, the Doctor once more took the lead of the search party.

They made more progress by daylight, and some of the party arrived at length at Crazy Bill's hovel. Seeing the open door, Dr. Knollys went up to it to ask if anything had been seen of the boys. There was, however, no sign of life about the place, and he was turning away when Roger, who had been wandering amongst the trees, ran up with a short lead pencil he had just found, marked P. W.

"That certainly looks like a clue," said the Doctor. And the search was renewed with eagerness and zest.

Roger's keen eyes now noticed a few boyish footprints in the soft path, and he set off down it at full speed, followed by others of the party. He was the first round the curve in the path, and pulled up suddenly at the sight which met his eyes.

Before he could utter an exclamation, Dr. Knollys had reached the spot, and seeing what he naturally supposed to be a man in the act of entering the cave, called "Hullo, there!"

As, however, the man neither moved nor answered, he raised his voice to a shout, which reached the ears of the half sleeping boys within.

"Help, help, help!" they cried, starting up and running onward.

"Come, my man, stand aside, please," shouted the Doctor, thinking that Bill was some one who had gone to help the boys and could get no farther—while vaguely wondering within himself at the utter stillness and silence of the man.

"He's dead," called Theo, with chattering teeth, "and we can't move him."

Two or three pairs of strong hands soon moved the huge helpless body and laid it on the ground, while others were outstretched to help two white-faced, trembling lads out of their prison.

They were so cold and dazed they could hardly stand, and were grateful to their friends who by turns hoisted them upon their shoulders and carried them home.

It was not quite so easy to deal with the prostrate man. He was heavier, and dead or not dead, no one offered to carry him.

"I don't think he's dead," said the Doctor. "It looks like a fit—for his eyes are quite bright—but we cannot leave him here, it will take too long to fetch a doctor out so far. We must improvise a litter. Fortunately our own infirmary is empty now."

"Couldn't we take the old door off his cottage, sir?" said Denton, for by this time all had recognised the poor fellow as Crazy Bill.

"The very thing; you and Fields go and bring it."

They returned in a few minutes with the door between them, and Denton had also taken the precaution to bring a couple of old blankets from the bed which stood in a corner of the room.

One of these being spread over the door, Bill was lifted and laid upon it.

When he was carefully covered with the rug, the litter was gently lifted and carried steadily through the wood, until at length the little cortège reached the school infirmary.

This was a detached house, standing in its own garden, at some little distance from the school.

The bearers deposited their burden in a ground-floor dormitory; and with a request to the caretaker to beg Dr. Gray to go on to the school—as soon as he had done what was needful for Bill—the Head-master hurried into the schoolhouse.

The boys had just finished some soup and were longing to lie down and sleep—but on the whole, it was a relief to see Dr. Knollys first.

He looked very grave when they had finished their story, but said little, as Dr. Gray was just then admitted.

The latter gave directions that the two lads should be kept

warm, and allowed to sleep as long as they felt inclined ; after which they were to have a good substantial meal, and then he thought no harm would result from the fatigue and exposure they had undergone.

* * * * *

Two scared-looking boys stood at the door of the Doctor's study the following afternoon. They had slept until noon, and had since eaten a good dinner in the housekeeper's room, after which they had been sent for by the Head-master. Their fathers had arrived.

On their way to the study they had heard that Bill was dead, and both felt awfully miserable about it.

The good Doctor, who understood his boys thoroughly, could see how wretched they were, and forbore to spoil the lesson which experience was teaching them by a wordy moral.

He merely told them to be ready in half an hour to attend the inquest ; adding that of course they would find it a painful occasion, but they must speak the truth and withhold nothing.

It would take too long to give details of the inquest. "Death from natural causes"—heart-failure in fact—was the verdict read out by the coroner, after the jury had duly considered the evidence given by Dr. Gray and the other witnesses. And while glad that no opinion more personal to the boys was expressed, Dr. Knollys saw with great satisfaction that they were thoroughly impressed with the knowledge of their own culpability in the matter.

The following day Bill's funeral took place from the infirmary, attended by the whole school. It was an occasion which no boy ever forgot.

"Oh, 'Tedo, I'm so thankful it's over !"

"And I too, Hal ; only I feel, somehow, as if it never can be really over—because I can't forget that I plagued him—and now he is dead, and whatever I do now I can't make him live again. I don't think I shall ever want to plague any one again as long as I live." And Theo put his head under the clothes, big boy as he was, and cried himself to sleep.

THE BOY BURGLARS.

BY GRACE STEBBINGS.

ONE o'clock in the morning. One of those night-mornings of the summer term, when the darkness is enough to serve as a disguise to wanderers, and yet the soft twilight is sufficient to save those same wanderers from the eerie feeling that belongs to the same hour in the winter time.

The deep and profound stillness proper to the time reigned throughout the Willows, as Mr. Burlington had named his school when he first built it; and he stuck to the name in spite of boys, and even parents and friends, nicknaming it, as might have been expected under the circumstances, the "Weeping Willows." He would laugh his bright, large laugh if any one seriously suggested a change.

"Don't you see it is the best advertisement I can have? The sunny faces and upright figures of my manly youngsters strike folks at once with the magnificent contrast between facts and fiction."

At any rate the name remained, and as already stated, on this especial night a fitting peacefulness held sway throughout the handsome building whose inmates had well earned sleep by steady work in the class-rooms, and a brilliantly successful cricket match in the playing-fields. "The Weepers against the Laughers," as the schools themselves always termed the annual match between the boys domiciled at "The Willows" and "The Larches."

This year, to the Weepers' delight, and their sympathetic head-master's great satisfaction, the laugh for "The Laughers" had been "on the wrong side of the mouth,"

But of course it need not be told that there were hitches sometimes even in this wisely-governed and high-toned school. The very best bicycle that ever was made comes to grief sometimes, and the best beloved cricket-bat or tennis racket will not always win its owner the game.

The silence and stillness of the Willows at one o'clock in the morning was not as absolute as it should have been. There was just about as much sound in the blue corridor as a father mouse foraging for himself and family might make. Then a door-handle turned, and the hinges gave a "horrid creak," followed by an uneasy snore.

The next moment the snorer gave a grunt. He was being shaken, and to tell the whole truth pinched. However, he could only manage grunts, and those rather feeble and choky ones, for a very determined hand was pressed tightly down upon the sleeper's mouth as a precautionary measure till wakefulness and wisdom should be at one.

"Turnips," whispered a voice, belonging to the hand, "Cabbage and I are going to burgle old Burnett's apples, and you'll come, of course."

"Course," was the terse answer from Turnips, so called from his fine, ivory-tinted face, which he suddenly wriggled free. In half a minute he was out of bed, into as many dark garments as were absolutely needful for the proposed excursion, and out in the corridor with Taters, so called because he was Irish, and Cabbage so called for no earthly reason at all, excepting that as the other two of the trio of chums were Turnips and Taters, he *had* to be Cabbage. Carrots had left school at the end of the last term.

But to return to the conspirators.

"Now?" asked Turnips eagerly when the three were gathered together in the corridor, where explanations could be more safely given than in the company of five other pairs of ears, and one of them belonging to a monitor.

"Well, it's this," murmured Taters. "You know those dozen or so of apples hanging over the hedge we left on old Burnett's apple tree last Wednesday. Well, just in between

first and second innings this afternoon we slipped off down his lane, thinking a whole week might have ripened them, and what do you think we saw ? ”

“The other side of the mountain, was all that he did see,” quoted Turnips in his queer, abstracted way. “I mean,” hastily, as his wandering wits were recalled with a sharp nip, “I mean what ? ”

“Why, there was the old curmudgeon himself with a huge hamper at his feet, and every bough was stripped, far and near, as bare as the back of your hand. So we just mean to burgle his cottage, and have away the apples, basket and all.”

“H’m—Yes, ’course. How do we go ? ”

“Out here,” was the brief reply, as Taters mounted on to the sill of the open staircase window, slipped over, and descended to the turf outside as easily as if ivy had a range of orderly steps. His companions followed him equally at their ease, excepting that Turnips rolled down the last few feet. But that was only because he foolishly took to repeating some gibberish about babies, and cradles, and tree-tops, forgetting where he was. He wasn’t hurt, of course, no more than a cat would have been, and the next moment all three were scampering off with the noiselessness of their shoeless feet, eager to make their first essay at burglary.

“Hullo ! Cabbage ! ” In a low, quick whisper from Taters.

“Well ? ” in equally cautious tones from two voices at once, and as hurriedly.

“Why,” moving to the side of his companions, and speaking quite bitterly, “there isn’t any lock to pick. The door isn’t even bolted, it’s on the latch.”

“That’s not so bad as this window,” muttered Turnips, in a tone of the deepest disgust. “Let alone being fastened, it is not so much as quite shut down. It’s a shame. Speak the truth and—— I mean, what’s the fun of burgling an open house ? ”

“Suppose,” said Cabbage hesitatingly, “suppose we try

the back door? Perhaps that is locked. We might have to break that open."

"Supposing I was you, and supposing—" began Turnips, and this suggestion was instantly voted out, even by agreement of the Proposer himself. It was too plainly making a farce of such a serious affair.

"No," said Taters with his easy-going, sensible Irish philosophy. "No, we must just be content to make the best of a bad business. There isn't any fun in the burgling line to be got, so we must go without. And, after all, apples were what we came for, so let's come in and get them and then be off back to our beds. It's queer how cold it can be even in the summer time, at night."

So saying he moved back to the cottage door, and with fingers silent as a mouse's toe, lifted the latch, and a few moments later the three marauders stood in the neat, orderly kitchen-sitting-room of the three-roomed cottage—four-roomed if the scullery with its brick oven be reckoned in. And certainly it deserved to be for, "old Joe followed his beloved wife's plan of doing everything there that might otherwise have cluttered up," or in any way destroyed the nice neatness of the principal apartment of the humble home.

It's simple pleasantness and propriety appealed curiously to the best feelings of the unwarranted midnight visitors. For a full minute all three stood perfectly still and silent, gazing about them.

When they chaffed each other afterwards on this fact, each and all declared that of course they stood still to look around to see where the apples might be, for no other cause.

They were not consciously telling untruths. At that age they never guessed that they came to this strange pause for any other reason. But when he came to man's estate Taters knew differently.

"What was your first impression when you saw the Tay Mahal?" asked a friend one day.

"The same that I had once before in my life," was the deep-breathed reply. "An impression of beauty that quite

satisfied. The other time was in the room of a very poor man's cottage—a room dimly lighted by the summer night, and perfumed with a great bowl of roses. For the first time in my life I felt then that beauty lives. I felt it again when I looked at that wonderful memorial."

But while Taters and his companions thus waited, they knew not why, the hush was suddenly broken by the sound of a child's voice from the floor above.

"Daddy," came the call, sweetly as the ring of a silver bell. "Is you awake, daddy?"

"Now I am," came the answer in hurried anxiety. "But why a'nt you asleep, my Lammie? Are you ill?"

"No, daddy. It were dreaming of my burfday to-morrow waked me up. Do you think, daddy, as it's my burfday, you and me, both of us, could have a weenie little burfday pudding, same as mother made us last year?"

"Ah! my Lammie, if only your mother, your good, clever mother——"

And the hearers below heard a great gulp break in upon the speaking voice, and at the risk of betraying themselves they gulped too, lumps that they had unexpectedly found in their throats.

"If only your mother were alive now to look after us both, and make two ends meet. But yes, yes, ye shall have your little bit of a proper dinner, my Lammie, and your pudding too. Leastways, I expect the butcher 'ull give me a cut of steak, and some scraps o' suet for they apples, though I have had to gather of 'em half ripe, to save them from they bad boys. As it is they've took the best on 'em, as I meant should buy your poor little feet a pair o' new shoes, bad young rascals they be."

While he was speaking there was a movement below stairs. Three other pairs of feet were moving instinctively farther away from a hamper of apples that stood in full view in the little back kitchen. Odd! for those pairs of feet had made a risky midnight journey on purpose to fetch that tempting fruit. They were right back by the outer door now, when the clear sweet silver voice stayed them there a few moments longer.

"P'r'aps, daddy——"

"Aye, Lammie?"

"Only, p'r'aps, daddy, they ain't all bad boys. P'r'aps they wanted apples most as I wants 'em, real bad. And perhaps they'll never steal no more, poor boys."

"That won't give you no nice new shoes."

"Well, daddy dear, I'll go to sleep again, and dream I've got them. I had a lovely dream just now that we had a whole chicken for dinner, and a great big cake too for tea. I'm most asleep again now."

"The cake, you see, is all right, because it's in the tuck box I got from home yesterday. But how about the chicken and the steak?"

Three boys had crept noiselessly out of Jem Burnett's cottage, and were rapidly approaching the Willows, and these were the first words that had been uttered by any of them since they first entered the farm labourer's home. But they were taken quite as a matter of course, quite as much so as if a long conversation had been going on.

"That's just what I've been wondering," said Taters, quite calmly. "But I think I've got it all settled up now. Old yellow-skin offered Turnips a shilling the other day for his new knife. He can let him have it now. That will buy the steak. And Farmer Tyrrell talked a lot of bosh about gratitude last Saturday, when I picked his small brat out of the field, where the bull was running at him. I expect that will reach to a chicken now, if I palaver a bit."

"Still, the dame went to market to buy—I mean, there's the shoes," sighed Turnips, whose grammar was one of his weak points in the education line. "And the doll—I once had a dear little doll, dears, you know."

"No, I don't. What rubbish you talk," said Cabbage, half irritably. "Who cares if you had?"

"*You* had!" repeated Turnips indignantly. "*You* had indeed! I never had such a ridiculous thing any more than yourself. But some man had once, I suppose—at any rate

he says so in poetry. And the thing now is that girl-kids always have dolls on their birthdays, and of course Lammie must have one. But where's it to come from? Silly name, Lammie, awfully silly!"

He only uttered that growl because he was feeling so disconsolate at the fact that the contents of his purse, all told, were fivepence and three farthings, and it was a relief to growl at something.

But Taters, with his usual faculty for making the best of things, once more came to the rescue. He had twopence-halfpenny. Cabbage had sixpence with a hole in it which he had been keeping for luck.

"And, you see, the luck has come, because here it is for the doll. My sister Eileen got a splendiferous one for tenpence-halfpenny, so there'll be something over for lollipops. And as for the shoes, you see we don't know the size, so we couldn't get them anyhow. Good-night. There's lots to arrange first thing in the morning, so be spry."

Taters himself was spry enough. Three minutes after his parting injunction he had swarmed up the ivy, and was in bed and asleep.

Seven o'clock a.m., and a tap at the head-master's door.

"Come in!" rather impatiently. Had not the new housemaid been told that she had no business with her brushes and dusters at that hour?

But it was no housemaid who answered his call. Three boys entered. Three of the fifth-form boys — Melville, O'Hallaran, and Durnford, otherwise "Cabbage," Turnips, and Taters, and all with such earnest, eager faces that their master was at once eager too, seeing that he possessed the first greatest necessity for master or missionary, the keenest possible power of sympathy.

"Why, whatever is your business with me at this early hour?"

"That's just it, sir," burst out Taters, head spokesman of course, as usual.

"It's just the hour that's the thing, you see, and as we

go home to-morrow we thought perhaps you wouldn't mind letting us have to-day. I mean this first bit of it."

"Why, you lazy, impudent young rascals," came the part wondering, part laughing, and very inquiring reply, "what for indeed?"

Then Cabbage came forward. "Please, sir, don't ask us to tell you everything, not till we are grown up. We did something we are sorry for, but we have done no harm to anything or anybody, only we learnt something that makes us wish to put a bit of brightness into somebody else's life."

"You can all, on your honours, assure me you did nothing radically wrong?"

"Yes, yes, yes;" three shouts at once.

"Nothing I should mind doing at home, as far as it went," added Taters, with a confidential sort of nod.

"Well, I'll trust you, the rather that I am sure you will all feel on your honour with me, in future, to be lads to be trusted during the remainder of your terms at the Willows. And now I should like to know why you are here, and not in your classroom at work?—the bell has rung!"

"Yes, sir, but we want you to give us leave to go out to do an act of kindness of which you would be sure to approve, and which you will doubtless applaud when we are able to tell you all about it."

The master looked puzzled, and for once he hesitated, but it was the last day of the term, and he thought he could trust them, and so putting them once more upon their honour, he granted them two hours' leave.

An hour later Burnett's little six-year old girl had a minute of wild, never-to-be-forgotten delight. She went down as usual a few minutes after eight o'clock to meet her father, on his return to breakfast, and on reaching the garden gate her astonished eyes fell upon an enormous, very badly done up parcel lying just inside, and half disclosing its contents.

Delight, it may be confessed, was mingled with an awe at first that almost amounted to terror. Joe Burnett and

his child stared at the bundle together for some time before they ventured to pick it up.

"It be fur you, my Lammie, sure enuf," ejaculated Joe. "There be—'A birthday present for Lammie Burnett,' writ as plain as print."

And the package contained all the things the intended burglars had decided to give, together with the addition of a jar of marmalade from Cabbage's most timely tuck-box.

Fifteen years later Captain "Taters" V.C. once more sat chatting with Mr. Burlington.

"It is good to be here once more, in the dear old school," said Taters heartily.

"We are very proud to have you," was the equally hearty reply. "Your noble career does honour to your school."

The bright, fine Irish head was bent low for a few moments.

"Such as my career is I owe it to a little child's loving prayer, and simple faith that even 'naughty boys' are not all bad, and to a generous-hearted, wise man's trust. Melville and Durnford unite with me in our gratitude to you."

"I in turn owe you three gratitude for the splendid way in which from that time on you proved the justice of my trust. Although," in a lighter tone, and with a mischievous gleam in the fine eyes—"trusting burglars is not always wise."

O'Hallaran started and flushed slightly, but half laughed too. "You found that part of the business out, then?"

Dr. Burlington smiled. "It was not very difficult to put two and two together. You lads had roused my interest in the father and his gentle child, and for months I never paid a visit to the cottage without hearing of a certain marvellous parcel that contained the exact things that the little one had expressed a wish for in the middle of the night. She put her gifts to the credit of fairy folks, her father to a conscience-stricken somebody who once borrowed five shillings of him; but I, in my own mind, said—'Penitent, breaking-bounds boy burglars, of whom, in after years, I now hope I may be proud.'—And, all three, I am."

THE UNDOING OF THE HIGH SCHOOL.

CHARLES E. PEARCE.

THE Hornbrook High School and the Foundation School of the same quiet little country town could scarcely be called rivals. It would perhaps be too much to say that the High had a contempt for the Foundation—it was rather more of a condescending toleration. The High good-naturedly admitted the right of the Foundation to exist. But it was only a charity school, after all.

When, therefore, Reginald Wrayton, the captain of the High, received a letter from Harry Mayland, the head boy of the Foundation, challenging him to play a football match, for the benefit of the Town dispensary, Reggie had a feeling something resembling—well, not dismay but certainly irritation.

“Like their cheek,” were the words on the tip of his tongue. Then it occurred to him that the matter was one he could not deal with personally, it would have to be referred to the Doctor.

“I see no harm. The cause is a good one,” said Dr. Granger, after reading the letter three times.

“I suppose it is, sir, but the match won’t be worth looking at. Our fellows will simply swarm over the Town chaps. It’s really too ridiculous.”

“Well—well, the ridicule won’t fall on us. You mustn’t look upon the thing in a vain-glorious light. Possibly the Foundation boys may learn something from our methods of play, and this should console them for their defeat.”

“I hope it will, sir,” said Reginald, with an inward chuckle.

So the fiat went forth. The challenge was accepted.

The Foundation boys hitherto had certainly not shone as footballers. Perhaps it was that the lads of the Foundation had to leave school at an earlier age than the boys of the High, and so had not equal chances of gaining weight and experience. The Foundation boys were day-scholars, and those of the High were boarders, and it was thus more difficult for the former to keep a team together. Lastly cricket, football and athletics generally constituted a "cult" at the High. Hence Reginald Wrayton's expression "like their cheek" was not wholly inappropriate.

Harry Mayland was quite aware of the stupendous nature of the task he had undertaken, but he did not despair. He had been goaded into it by the disparaging remarks of a cousin who was at the High, and he determined if possible to take down the pride of the "Eton-jacket and collar brigade," as the Highs were termed.

Harry himself was a fair player, and he could pick out two or three in the school who could be relied upon, but the majority of them were "no class." To put a team into the field with any chance of success he would have to beat up among the old boys for recruits.

He found it more difficult than he expected. The enthusiasm was there, but when they heard that their opponents were to be the "cracks" of the High, most of them showed the white feather.

However, pertinacity succeeded, and after stupendous efforts Harry could count altogether upon a full team. They were rather a scratch lot, but were strong and sturdy and most had played a game at one time or another.

Harry Mayland had all the qualities of a born leader. He was always cheerful, he refused to think of defeat, he had the capacity of infusing his confidence into his followers, he was cool, level-headed and resourceful.

If one added that he had a spice of craft it would not be doing him an injustice. But his craft was employed to balance the scale when sides were unequal. He saw very plainly that

the only way to make the match an even one was by the exercise of a little ingenuity. But he kept his plan to himself.

Under his influence a violent epidemic of athletic fever broke out amongst the youths of Hornbrook.

Never in the history of the place had such enthusiasm been seen. Divers and terrible methods of training were indulged in. Any member of the football team seen walking instead of running was immediately denounced as a shirker. Two unfortunates being discovered indulging in surreptitious cigarettes were ignominiously dismissed, and Charlie Giles, whose birthday intervened, had a stormy interview with his Captain on the subject of pastry.

To the question of diet was attached the greatest importance, and here the mothers of Hornbrook suffered more than any one else, as they were required to totally reorganise the family commissariat department. Vegetables were banished, also pastry, and the staple fare was raw beef steaks.

Great things spring from small, and by degrees the football match assumed an importance which Harry never contemplated.

Why not, considering the charitable end in view, make the festival one worthy of Hornbrook? was the question asked in the local paper by a public-spirited townsman. Why not have a procession in the morning—a brass band—fireworks in the evening—collecting boxes rattling all day long?

The idea caught on. Then it was suggested that the occasion should breathe the spirit of fraternity. Hitherto the High and the Foundation had looked askance at each other. Here was an opportunity which ought not to be neglected for breaking down conventional barriers. Why should not the Foundation boys offer their hospitality to the High boys to mark the occasion?

Some timid spirits were doubtful about this. The Head master of the High might not approve, and a snub would damp the whole proceedings. Enterprise, however, carried the day, and great was the rejoicing when it was announced that Dr. Granger had graciously, on behalf of the High team, accepted the invitation to luncheon.

Harry heard of the luncheon with secret joy. It really made the plan which had been simmering in his mind easy of accomplishment—especially as his father was the leading confectioner of the town and would do the catering.

But there was a danger of the engineer being hoisted on his own petard. This would have to be guarded against. He called a meeting of his team.

“Look here, you chaps ; if we want to win the match, or even make a decent show, we must exercise self-denial. You know what I’ve told you about pastry. The stuff’s fatal to football. There’ll be no end of it at the luncheon, and my orders are, not a mouthful until after the match.”

“All the goodies will be gone by that time,” said one of the half-backs gloomily. “The ‘Eton collars’ won’t leave us as much as a crumb.”

“The more they cram the better for us. All you’ve got to do is to pretend to eat a lot. I’ll arrange with my father for a reserve stock ; and after the match we can set to and make up for lost time. If we can only stuff the High full enough, we’ll run ’em off their legs before half-time.”

This was Harry’s plan of campaign. The question was whether the High boys would yield to temptation or martyrise themselves for the sake of the game. Harry’s opinion was that they were so cocksure of winning they would not think twice when hot mutton pies, pork pies, steak-and-kidney pies, mince pies, jam puffs, and other indigestibles were put before them.

The eventful day arrived. The brass band brayed its loudest, the collecting boxes rattled merrily, a little knot of tramps passing through Hornbrook heard the jingling sound with feelings of envy—one gentleman of the Weary-Willie type especially.

“It’s all for charity, they ses. Ain’t we objects of charity ? Why don’t they give us a bit on account outer one o’ them boxes ?” grumbled Mr. Samuel Stagg, the gentleman in question, his hungry eyes gloating on a trap of dainties which a confectioner’s man was carrying into the Town Hall.

"Ah! Why, we wouldn't be allowed in the football field without we puts down a tanner," said his chum. "I'm orf. I hates sich selfishness."

With this Mr. Stagg parted from his friend and strolled leisurely towards the Town field, where the match was to be played.

The luncheon proved a tremendous success.

It was delightful to see the politeness of the Town boys to their guests. They waited on them hand and foot. Never once was a plate allowed to be empty. Pork pies, veal-and-ham pies, mutton pies, steak-and-kidney pies were proffered and accepted. Piles of sandwiches and rows of tarts disappeared like magic, washed down by seas of lemonade and ginger-beer.

But their captain's eye was upon them. Once, indeed, he had occasion to rise and admonish one of the forwards by driving his knuckles into the back of his neck as a reminder that starvation and glory were better than repletion and defeat.

So it came about that while the High boys gorged to their hearts', or, to speak correctly, to their stomachs' contents, the Town boys observed a spartan abstemiousness while assiduously waiting upon their High visitors; at the same time carefully setting a plentiful supply aside, to be taken to their dressing-room for consumption after the match.

In due course each player cast off his ordinary costume and appeared in the regulation football toggery. The thrilling moment arrived when the captains tossed for choice of goals. The High won and elected to play with the sun in their eyes, but with a strong wind in their favour.

The game opened with great spirit. The ball was immediately rushed into the Town quarters and the High boys forced a couple of corners in rapid succession.

About this time Mr. Sam Stagg, who had been tiptoeing to see what he could over the hedge, appeared to lose interest in the game and slouched away just before the High boys, full of the energy with which they had started, scored a soft goal.

As the game proceeded, however, it was noted that this energy was short-lived.

The pork pies, the veal-and-ham pies, the mutton pies, the rump-steak pies, the sandwiches, the jam tarts, and the plum-duff soon began to get in their deadly work. The High supporters groaned as they saw the listless efforts of their side. Long before half-time came round it was evident that the superior condition of the Town team would prevail. Disappointment was succeeded by disgust, and remarks more forcible than polite were heard from the lips of some of the most staunch of the High partisans.

As the High team grew weaker their opponents became stronger. The High goal was bombarded, the men knocked over; they were tricked and robbed of the ball, and the culminating point was reached when one of their "backs" kicked through his own goal.

Ten minutes from time and still a tie.

Five minutes.

Three.

Then Harry Mayland got possession of the ball. He flew down the touch line. The High supporters yelled "off side!" The Town supporters implored him almost with tears in their eyes to go on.

The redoubtable Rogers, one of the stoutest of the High team in more ways than one, in vain tried to stop him, and in his efforts to pursue slipped down. A terrific yell went up and the High goal-keeper, meanwhile loudly appealing for "Foul!" as a last resource, on the off chance that there may have been one, was beaten.

The game was ended by a dexterous shot from Harry's foot curling up into the corner of the net just under the top bar.

A second later the referee's whistle blew "Time!"

Hornbrook had won by the odd goal!

Harry crossed the field and put his arm within that of his cousin, through whose bragging the match had really originated. The latter had played forward and looked horribly disgusted at the defeat of the High.

"Sorry to disappoint you, old chap," said Harry laughingly.

"Disappoint me! It's a staggerer, I must admit. How on earth did you do it?"

"Oh, it's a way we Foundation fellows have. We never do the right thing, you know. Of course we ought to have lost. Better luck next time."

Chuckling, Harry, with his appetite set on edge with the exertion and the fresh keen air, hastened towards the dressing-room. Another boy was on the same job, but he gave way to his captain. Harry flung the door open.

What a sight revealed itself to his astonished eyes!

The place was in confusion, pies of every description, some of them half eaten, others just nibbled, a few which appeared not to have given satisfaction were flung anywhere, and in the midst of the scene of the confusion lay Mr. Samuel Stagg, fast asleep and snoring loudly.

He had gorged and gorged and gorged until he could gorge no longer.

Like the members of the High team he had to own himself defeated by superior forces.

It was a bitter disappointment to the Foundation boys to find that their banquet had been anticipated. It is true that they won, but it was at a tremendous sacrifice.

Really, when one came to think of it, the only one who had anything approaching satisfaction was Sam Stagg.

But even Mr. Stagg's satisfaction was not complete.

He was heard to remark, when the mayor sentenced him to imprisonment for a fortnight, he felt so bilious that the sight of a bit o' food would turn him sick. He did not want to hear pies mentioned for another six months. He might as well spend the time it would take him to get well in gaol as anywhere else.

But in the seclusion of the cell he felt very savage when he thought what an opportunity he had missed of scooping the stray shillings, the silver watches and chains and sundries of the Town boys. As with the High boys, so with Sam Stagg:—the pies had been his undoing.

OUR RAILWAY.

A WEST OF ENGLAND SCHOOL STORY.

BY H. J. A. HERVEY.

CHARLEY Maxwell was a general favourite at Uplands School, where he and four other seniors were all mugging together for Sandhurst. Charley's heart, however, was not in it, and ere breaking up for the summer vacation, he told his chums that he was going to "have it out" with his father, and backed by a certain maiden aunt, who was not only rich but his godmother, and very fond of him, hoped to get his way, and be allowed to study for an Indian railway engineer's billet, instead of an army commission, as hitherto intended. When Uplands reassembled, Maxwell announced that he had gained his point, chiefly through Aunt Laura's assistance, and that Cooper's Hill, not Sandhurst, was to be his primary objective.

Uplands was a small, select school, recently started by the Rev. Durand Fairweather, a retired Indian chaplain, who was assisted by two laymen tutors, Messrs. Bird and Miller, the mathematical and English masters respectively, while his reverence took the classics. French, drawing, and other extras were taught by visiting professors who came on stated days. There were twenty boarders and forty day-boys, of ages between sixteen and eight : the house stood well into the country near Bath, and Mr. Fairweather rented it from a Colonel Keef, who lived at Avon View, the only other residence in the immediate vicinity of Uplands, and separated from it by an eighty-yard strip of broken waste land. The city suburb, containing the shops, post-office, etc., lay half a mile to the east.

Colonel Keef was an old Indian Army officer : he had made money out there, and on final retirement to England purchased the two houses, Avon View and Uplands, occupying the former, and in due course renting the latter to the Rev. Mr. Fairweather. Of the old officer's large family, his two youngest sons, Tom and Fred, fourteen and thirteen, attended Uplands as day-scholars. Boyish, and full of fun himself, the Colonel loved all boys, and frequently came into the playground through a door in the ten-foot paling, which shut in the school premises from the strip of waste land already referred to. This door was always locked, but the Colonel possessed a duplicate key. He and Mr. Fairweather had been friends in India—they were so now, in all respects save one : the Principal had a rooted objection to everything in the shape of "grub," in the schoolboy's acceptance of the term, while the Colonel held exactly the opposite view. If a chap was caught with even a bun, an apple, or a pennyworth of sweets, the delicacy would be sternly confiscated, and the owner punished. On this point only was Mr. Fairweather's rule severe : in others he was kindhearted and indulgent. At first the Colonel pooh-poohed the clergyman's prejudices, and on the strength of an old friendship, added perhaps to their relative position of landlord and tenant, also the fact of his two boys being at the school, he would visit the playground, often loaded with good things, in the distribution of which he took a huge delight. Mr. Fairweather protested again and again : the Colonel as persistently laughed him off, till the Head at last became angry, whereupon his neighbour, seeing that ructions were likely to ensue, desisted from openly showering these welcome benefits on the boys, and contented himself with surreptitiously sending supplies by his sons, to one chap to-day, to another to-morrow, and so on. Needless to say that the secret was well kept, and that the donor was worshipped by the recipients. Thus matters stood at the time this story opens.

"Yes, I have to thank my Aunt Laura," explained Maxwell.

"The pater would not hear of it till she offered to stand the expense of Cooper's Hill, and refused to pay a penny towards Sandhurst ; so he gave in."

"Why was she so keen on backing you?" demanded Conway, the school captain.

"Because she thinks that I have a bent for railway engineering."

"Is your aunt rich?" inquired Tyrrell.

"Rather! the pater could never afford to pay for Sandhurst or Cooper's Hill without her help. She gave me ten pounds, and a complete little railway, to encourage me—she said—in studying for my profession."

"A complete little railway!" sneered Tom Keef, "a tin affair, in a card-board box, I suppose."

"Grandmother! it's a working model: the engine goes under steam and pulls carriages; but I've not had time to try it yet."

They regarded him incredulously, and Conway said, "You're gassing, Max."

"I'm not! Come—and I'll show you the whole thing."

"Where?" asked Hatchell, another senior.

"In the box-room," and they all trooped after him.

"Here you are!" cried Charley, indicating two deal cases.

With a nail-puller they opened the larger case, full of smaller boxes, from which, to their wonderment, they unpacked a locomotive named Hiawatha, three passenger cars, and six high-sided uncovered trucks; all exact miniatures of regular railway vehicles! Hiawatha was fitted for spirits of wine instead of fuel: she faithfully resembled the G.W.R. express locomotives—with which they were all so familiar, only that she had no cab, the presence of which would interfere with getting at her gear. The passenger coaches, all three classes, actually had glass windows, and the luggage trucks were also "true to the life." They had seen such things in London shops, they had read of them, but none had never handled these fascinating toys as they were now doing.

"Well, what do you think?" asked Charley, after enjoying their astonishment and admiration for some minutes.

"Splendid!" murmured Tyrrell; "but what do they run on?"

"Rails—in the other case: we'll open it."

The box was crammed with rail lengths, already furnished with cross-ties, and each length bearing a number. An end partition in the box contained spanners, monkey-wrenches, and other small tools.

"What are the numbers for?" inquired Conway.

"To fit them in a circle."

"And what are in those?" demanded Fred Keef, pointing to three longer boxes still lying at the bottom of the larger case.

"I had forgotten them!" cried Maxwell; "lug them out."

To their increased enchantment they unpacked three little gaily-painted stations with fittings complete; also many figures representing uniformed railway officials, and passengers, the last flexible—to enable their being seated in the cars!

At this moment Mr. Bird entered the room; he immediately became interested, and examined each article critically. The boys were silent, waiting for the master to speak.

"So, so; a costly but very excellent toy," he observed after a lengthy manipulation of Hiawatha. "Whose is all this?"

"Mine, sir," replied Charley—with pardonable pride.

"I congratulate you, Maxwell; do you know how to work it?"

"No, sir," he answered diffidently. "My aunt gave it to me, as I am to read for the Indian State Railways as an engineer. She thinks I could learn something of my profession from these models, sir. She is rich, and very fond of me."

"I should think so, when she presents you with such an expensive plaything as this," smiled Mr. Bird. "But you will not be driving trains out there, Maxwell: your business will be the construction of the lines on which they run."

Charley's countenance fell. "Then these will be of no use to me, sir?"

"On the contrary, building a road for your little train will give you a capital idea of the reality. I have some practical knowledge of the work—and like it; so if Mr. Fairweather agrees, I will aid you."

A babel of voices begged him to explain.

Producing a pocket-book, and after consulting it, he said, "During our survey lessons last term we made the distance from the playground corner to Colonel Keef's gate to be 243 feet. Well, let us construct a line between these two points; but as these segmental rails won't do, will your aunt, Maxwell, order you 250 feet of straight rails, also some half-size picks and shovels?"

Charley simply gaped at him.

"Write and tell her of my suggestion," continued the master, amused at the boy's look of mystification. "Say that I am prepared to give you practical lessons in railroad building, as well as working your train."

"I will write this very day, sir!" gasped Charley.

"And let me know the result," saying which Mr. Bird walked off.

Maxwell posted his letter that afternoon: his aunt replied by return, acceding to his request, and before the week ended the same manufacturers delivered the necessary "plant" at Uplands. Charley immediately apprised Mr. Bird, he had propounded his scheme to the Head, who highly approved it, so the undertaking was put in hand forthwith.

With Mr. Bird as chief, they formed a construction party of the senior boarders, Conway, Tyrrell, Hatchell, Dean, Peterson, and the Keefs—day-boys. They would work during play hours, and to afford a short cut, the Head gave Mr. Bird his key of the door in the palings, strictly enjoining him to allow no straying down to the shops, no guzzling or eating of any kind.

They first pegged out the direction, a right line from the side of Colonel Keef's gate to the near corner of the playground. Arrived at the latter spot, Conway asked where the stations would be placed.

"One up at the Colonel's gate," replied the master, "another half-way, and the third at the corner—here."

"I propose an improvement, sir," exclaimed Conway. "Cut a small opening in the palings—for the train to pass through, and have the third station in the playground!"

"Yes, sir! yes, sir!" chorussed the others.

"A good idea," observed Mr. Bird; "I'll ask Mr. Fairweather. Hatchell, you are good with your brush and oil colours; employ your leisure this evening in painting 'Avon View,' 'Half Way' and 'Uplands' on the three station name-boards, at present blank. What say you, Maxwell?"

"Hurrah! Certainly, sir!" shouted Charley, dancing about in joyful appreciation.

"Now come along back, and I'll show you what to do. How will you cross this?" queried the tutor, halting at a small rivulet, five feet broad, with two-feet high banks that flowed at right angles to the proposed line.

"Dam it above, sir," suggested Conway, "and fill it in here with earth."

"And when your dam bursts, for the water tops it?"

They were mum.

"No; we may as well do it nicely if at all. Maxwell, are you ready to pay—say—a guinea for a trestle bridge?"

"A guinea? two—if you like, sir."

"Good! The carpenter who cuts the palings will make the bridge. I'll send for him and explain what we want. Now come with me; we must get the loan of Mr. Fairweather's garden baskets—for you to gather the metalling."

The Head assented to the door-cutting, provided they fitted it with a sliding trap and padlock: he also loaned the baskets; carrying which the party returned to the scene of work.

"There," said Mr. Bird, "I shall leave you for a little. Plenty of material lying about, so collect it in heaps alongside the track. Mind, Conway, no straying."

"I suppose he means stones on which the rails are

laid," observed Dean, as the master disappeared through the paling door, and they commenced gathering.

"I say," presently said Peterson, "there's the Colonel at his gate!"

"Expect he has some grub," sniggled Tom Keef.

The officer beckoned to the party. He had of course heard all about the railway, and after his own fashion thought well of the undertaking.

"Coast clear?" he whispered as the "gangers" turned in at the gate.

"Yes, sir," grinned Hatchell, guessing why he had summoned them.

"Then here you are!" he continued, producing a big paper-bag of pastry from behind his back. "Stuff it down while you can!"

They needed no second bidding to do that!

"What are the stones for?" asked the veteran, pointing to their half-filled baskets--which they now dropped.

"Metalling for the line, sir," responded Tyrrell. "Mr. Bird told us to gather it."

"Not of that size, I'm sure! Where's your sense of proportion, you young owls? These would do for the G.W.R.!"

They regarded each other mutely.

"Your gauge is six inches--isn't it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, then, as the stones on the G.W.R. road are to 4'-8½" gauge so is a 3" gauge to the stuff you require. Come along to my gravel-pit in the back garden, and fill your baskets there with nothing larger than hazel-nut kernels, and you'll be more to the mark. Fred, run and ask your mother for some ginger beer and bring it round to the gravel-pit. Never mind glasses."

The work progressed. The carpenter cut the trap in the playground paling, and fitted on a sliding door, and, further, built an engine-house on a siding at either end of the line. He took the measurements for the trestle bridge, and while he

was making the parts at his workshop according to Mr. Bird's specification, the "gangers" busied themselves in building the road, which was not all plain sailing, for several cuttings had to be dug, and all hollows crossed with embankments. Then the ballast was laid down, the rail-lengths distributed, and all hands set to "fish-plating" them together. This done, the metalling followed; after which Mr. Bird carefully went over the line foot-by-foot, teaching Maxwell how to detect inequalities and remove them. The stations—already name-painted by Hatchell, were set in position: "Avon View" and "Half Way" being protected from stray cattle by temporary hedges of thorns. The carpenter brought the bridge-pieces on a hand-truck; and for the better part of a half-holiday, indeed, right up to bedtime, a crowd of boys interestedly watched and aided in the erection under the master's superintendence. The next morning they nailed the rails on to the bridge-way; and, so far, all was complete.

"Now for a trial trip!" cried Mr. Bird, quite as excited as the fellows themselves. "But look here, we must have three live station masters—to start and stop the train: the dummies won't do, will they? I vote, therefore, that Conway takes 'Avon View'; Tyrrell, 'Half Way,' and Maxwell, the owner of the show, holds the post of honour at 'Uplands,' in the playground. What do you say?"

All agreed, though some looked disappointed.

"You others," continued the master, "can run alongside, or assemble in the playground to see the train come in; but you will get your turn 'station master' later on, I daresay. Now, Maxwell, be off with one or two, bring Hiawatha and the can of spirits; we'll run her first by herself."

Wildly they tore away, and soon came back, bringing the locomotive and can of spirits. The start would be from Avon View," where all the Keef family were assembled. They filled the boiler with water, ignited the furnace lamp, and while steam was getting up, Mr. Bird showed the three "station masters" how to manipulate the engine. Every one

stood round on the tip-toe of expectation. In due course, Hiawatha hissed like a tea-kettle, and when she commenced to roar, Conway partly depressed the throttle, whereupon the little machine—puffing pertly, and quite to the manner born—began to move ahead, while the crowd walked alongside. At “Half Way,” Tyrrell shut off steam, arrested the engine, and restarted her. This done, Mr. Bird and Maxwell sprinted on, reached the playground terminus in time to receive Hiawatha and bring her to a halt. The enthusiasm was great : this sort of thing strongly appealed to their hearts : even Mr. Fairweather came out and witnessed the arrival. The road proved nearly faultless ; the trestle bridge perfect, and as the little Hiawatha clanked resoundingly over the structure, her wheel-spokes twinkling, and the white steam billowing from her gallant little smoke-stack, several of the more impressionable chaps shed tears of literal rapture. Then lifting the engine, they reversed her, and attached all the vehicles, so that the down journey was made with a full load. The plaudits were now deafening, for the conditions were more realistic ; Hiawatha panting louder, the rumble greater ; and when Mr. Bird sounded the squeaky little whistle, the chaps cheered and hurrahed themselves hoarse. The Keefs were at “Avon View” as before : the Head, Mr. Miller, and all the fellows came too, so there was a big gathering at the Colonel’s gate.

“Come,” cried Mr. Fairweather, who had apparently enjoyed the spectacle as well as any one, “I think, Maxwell, that you should celebrate the opening of your railway with an entertainment. I am sure that the families of our day-boys would like to see your train working.”

“Oh, yes, sir !” from all sides.

“Then shall I send out invitations for Saturday next, at four p.m. ?”

“Do, please, sir !” eagerly replied Charley, nearly off his head at the idea of playing the showman to a crowd of sisters, mothers, cousins, and aunts.

“Very well,” continued the Principal graciously ; “and

when the opening run is over, the guests can have tea and bread-and-butter set out in the playground."

"Thank you, sir! Three cheers for Mr. Fairweather!" yelled the mob.

"We'll decorate the engine with flags and flowers," added Mr. Bird, who thoroughly entered into the spirit of the affair, "and start the first train from 'Avon View,' here."

"Will it be a passenger or a goods' train, Max?" inquired Conway, excitedly.

"Oh, passenger: 'twill be fun seating the people."

"No, no," interrupted Colonel Keef, in an undertone, "run both passenger *and* goods' trucks, as you have them now: they will look more imposing."

"Yes!" assented Charley breathlessly; "but shall we load the trucks with anything, sir? to make them look more imposing still?"

"No, don't do that," whispered the Colonel; "let them run light: the passengers will be load enough. I am going to see the start from this."

"But won't you come to the tea, sir?" asked Hatchell, in a low voice.

"Consisting of bread-and-butter, eh?" muttered the officer scornfully. "Nice tea! However, we'll be there."

The invitations went, to be accepted in almost every case, and Saturday morning dawned on a busy time for the Uplands boys. It was arranged that the guests in the first instance should congregate in the playground to see the arrival of the inaugural train: then the tea was to be partaken of; after which the company would be requested to scatter along the line and watch additional runs, notably from such coigns of vantage as the two other stations and the trestle bridge.

All assembled—chiefly ladies, girls and children: they were accommodated with chairs and garden seats, placed in a semi-circle round "Uplands" terminus. The whole train, in charge of Conway and his assistants, stood at "Avon View" Hiawatha, in full steam, and adorned with diminutive flags, was prepared to run off with her load; Tyrrell, Peterson, and

one or two others were at "Half Way," ready to do their part ; Maxwell, under Mr. Bird's wing, took his stand at "Uplands"—to stop the incoming train there ; Mr. Fairweather, beaming on every one, sat among the guests, while Mr. Miller with most of the boys, formed an outer fringe.

"All ready, sir !" presently sang out Mr. Bird, to the Head. "Give the signal, then !" came the response, whereupon Mr. Bird waved a long flagged pole that topped the palings. This was answered by a shrill, squeak-like whistle from the locomotive ; and its lilliputian puff-puff gradually growing more distinct fell on the straining ears of the assemblage. The train arrived at "Half Way," and as the puffing temporarily ceased, the Keefs, Conway and his party burst into the playground by the door, and joined the lookers-on. Again the tiny whistle and puff-puffing announced the start from "Half Way," and before the train hove in sight, Tyrrell and his chaps came scuttling in. All eyes were fixed on the trap door ; the little rumble and pigmy puff-puffing grew louder, and at last the train came bucketing through in glorious style ! Maxwell pounced on Hiawatha, shut off steam, and brought her and her load to a standstill at the platform. But lo and behold ! what on earth was all this ? not a "passenger" in any of the coaches, not an empty truck : all, all piled, stuffed to the full with packages of sorts ! Those not in the secret applauded, deeming it a part of the show : Mr. Fairweather took a paper bag out of a truck, and opening it he found the contents to be almond rock ! The murder was out ! Colonel Keef and his sons whispered among the chaps, who with surreptitious grins of delight fell to unloading the train, and in a short time the tea-tables that had hitherto boasted of nothing nicer than plates of thin bread-and-butter, groaned under a tastey supply of cakes, confectionery, and sweets ! Mr. Fairweather's brow clouded ; instinctively he glanced towards his neighbour : Messrs. Bird and Miller tried to suppress their laughter ; the fellows—except those who had been at "Avon View" and "Half Way"—stared aghast, while the guests thought it all a part of the play, and regarded those toothsome additions to

the homely fare spread on the tea-tables as very welcome ones. Colonel Keef simply "chortled in his joy": he went up to the Head, and drawing him aside, said, "Do not turn crusty over it, old fellow: the temptation was too great; say I did it, if you like. When they told me that you had nothing but thin bread-and-butter to offer your friends, I thought that for the honour of the school and the better satisfaction of all, they should have something nicer for such an occasion as opening a railway."

"Defeating my inculcations in so public a manner too!" fumed the Principal.

"Believe me, Fairweather," continued the veteran in a more serious tone, "you'll have no more cause to complain: this is the last time that I play tricks on you; so put a smooth face on it, and go, do the honours."

Fortunately, Mr. Fairweather was open to persuasion; the consequences being that they had a famous "tuck-out," and spent a very happy afternoon.

Charley Maxwell qualified for Cooper's Hill, passed out high on the list, and is now assistant engineer on the Chittee-Chuppat-ah State Railway in North India.

STUMAH.

BY FRANK H. SPEARMAN.

HE was a big dog, yet as mild mannered a gentleman as ever you saw. In his walk there was a dignity approaching haughtiness, but his eye was very gentle.

Sitting in my studio on Michigan Avenue, I grew so used to looking for the collie that if he did not come trotting along about ten o'clock in the morning, things did not seem to go just right the rest of the day.

He seldom failed me that summer. His way was marked by many a shoot and many a curve, but he never shot very far or curved very widely from a tall, slender boy, who picked his way slowly and uncertainly through the crowd that moved up and down the boulevard.

It was an evil summer for Chicago dogs. Do what their protectors would, follow the law to the last technicality, put on muzzles and jingle license tags—every day animals were lured from their homes and stolen from children by vicious dog-catchers.

Necessarily, in large cities, some provision must be made for taking up homeless and friendless and dangerous dogs. Such an idea is primarily humane, intended for the benefit of the dog as well as for the safety of the public. But when the dog-police turn into dog-pirates, and by cunning and violence kidnap dogs duly licensed, and this for a little gain, they become detestable.

I had indignantly laid down a newspaper describing such

a villainy and was looking out of my window. There I saw the big collie swinging up the street. He was of fawn colour and almost as large as a mastiff. Close behind came his young master, and I fell to wondering where they went together every morning.

At that moment a covered waggon driven rapidly along the street drew up at the curb, and out popped a man with a pole, from one end of which hung a wire loop. I think the fellow wore rubber shoes, for he ran across the street and up behind the collie like a lynx, slipped the noose over the dog's head, and with a tremendous endeavour pulled him over the driveway toward the waggon.

No gentleman held up by highwaymen was ever more dumbfounded than the collie, and in a moment the captor had his prey at the door of the cage. Everybody stopped, but no one interfered. The young master stood confused, evidently hearing the gasping yelps of his collie, but not knowing what the matter was.

I sprang up in a panic. To reach the street in time to help was impossible. Would nobody stop the wretch? I was almost ready to jump out of the window, when a young man came flying by on his wheel. He took in the situation at a glance, and at the risk of a header shot to the curb, jumped off, and trotting lightly across the driveway to where the pirate was struggling with his victim, tapped the fellow politely on the shoulder.

The dog-catcher turned with a torrent of abuse, when, to my inexpressible joy, the wheelman promptly knocked him down. It wasn't a push or a shove, but the keen, silent, sudden blow of an athlete.

The dog-catcher scrambled to his feet and ran round behind the waggon. The active cyclist, slipping the wire from the dog's neck, was proceeding to break the pole into bits under his feet, when the driver of the waggon ran at him. Hardly a word passed before the wheelman's fist shot out again, and the driver went down like a toy soldier. While he scrambled to his feet, the cowardly dog-catcher, safe on the

waggon, whipped up and made off, leaving his luckless driver to face the now angry crowd.

"Lynch him! Pound him! Kill him!" cried the valorous onlookers, seeing how easily the driver had been knocked down. One bystander did strike at the dazed man as he got up. The cyclist seized the interloper by the collar instantly.

"Strike a man when he's down, would you?" he exclaimed contemptuously, and sent the fellow spinning into the crowd. Then he turned to the flustered driver.

"Here's your hat," said he, taking it from a boy who had picked it up. "You don't look like a disreputable dog-catcher," he added, steadying the fellow, who was still weak on his legs. "Get away from here quietly now, before these people pound the life out of you."

"I ain't disreputable, either," protested the man, turning to his recent assailant as the most kindly disposed man in sight. "I only came to town yesterday, and that fellow, his name's Connelly, gave me a job driving his waggon, and claimed the dogs in Chicago were all going mad. I reckon it's the folks are going mad. I ain't going to run, not a foot. I didn't do anything to you, did I, mister?"

The young athlete looked nonplussed. "I thought you were going to hit me," said he.

"I hadn't any idea of hitting you. That dog-catcher says to me, 'Go back and get my pole,' and when I took hold of it you up and knocked me down."

"Why, you saw me knock the other fellow down, didn't you?"

"I didn't see anything till I got knocked down myself. 'Tain't hardly business neither, to knock a fellow down that way."

The wheelman burst into an apologetic laugh.

"I'm sorry I struck you so quick," said he frankly.

The countryman brushed the dust off his clothes with an injured air. "It *was* quick!" he muttered.

"I guess you just got in with a bad crowd."

"'Pears like I did. I ain't got any accidental insurance, neither. Gus Buds said I ought to take some before I come to Chicago. D'you reckon, mister, I could collect for gettin' knocked down?"

Discussing this point with the wheelman, the unfortunate driver made his way to the curb where the collie stood, panting and wagging his tail beside his master.

"I want to thank you," said the latter, reaching eagerly for the cyclist's hand, "for saving my collie. If I had half a pair of eyes, I'd not have left the job to you. I didn't really know what was going on until it was over. I'm awfully obliged to you, sir. I'm a newspaper artist; that is, when I can see. My name is Ben Andrews. Will you give me yours?"

"With pleasure," responded the wheelman. "I am a Chicago University man; my name's Cameron."

"And mine is William Seldon," interposed the ex-driver with the most amiable smile in the world, "and I reckon I'm just a natural-born fool. I didn't have no idea of stealing your dog. I understood the whole thing different."

"And I am Van Millet," said I, breaking into the group at that moment to introduce myself. "I saw the whole affair, but I couldn't get here in time to do anything. That's the handsomest dog I ever saw, Mr. Andrews. I want to shake hands with him, too. What's his name?"

"Stumah."

"Stumah?" I repeated, taking the collie's paw. "That's an odd name."

"Not to a lover of Scott," returned Ben, smiling. "I was going to explain," he continued. "I go every morning to the oculist's for treatment, and Stumah helps me make my way through the crowd. That's the only reason I take him down town, but I won't risk it again."

That's the way we became acquainted. Cameron really felt bad at having struck Bill Seldon, as we soon began to call him, with such inconsiderate haste. Bill was an innocent, good-natured greenhorn, but neither a fool nor a coward.

Of course, he did not want to resume dog-catching, and Ben Andrews got him installed as janitor in the big apartment building where he lived on Cottage Grove Avenue.

So it came about that Stumah and Bill were thrown together. The collie wouldn't make friends with him for a long time, but he was too big-hearted to harbour a grudge for ever. It takes a small mind to do that. Stumah could soon tell a kind heart from a cold one—as dogs and children always can—and Bill's heart was kind.

One day Stumah consented to go with Bill to the butcher's, where Bill presented him with a Wienerwurst—that's a certain little cooked sausage. Stumah received it with indifference—he would have preferred it hot—but he perceived the good intention. With the Wienerwurst, the collie swallowed any lingering resentment he may have felt for Bill's unfortunate part in the attempted kidnapping. From that day forth Stumah and Bill were friends.

Stumah rode with Seldon up and down in the elevator, followed him through the engine-room, the laundry, and into the side-walk area. Stumah would wait while Bill tacked up rent signs, and he would eye suspicious characters quite as closely as the vigilant janitor himself.

"He's a great dog," said Bill one day to Ben Andrews, "ye-es. But that's a funny name he's got."

"Not a bit of it," contended Ben. "That's the most natural name in the world for a dog. Bill, did you ever happen to read the 'Lady of the Lake'?"

"What lake?" asked Bill.

"I don't know what lake, Bill."

"Did *you* ever read it?" asked Seldon.

"Yes, but I don't think I ever knew what lake. At all events, there's a dog named Stumah in that poem. It's a Celtic word, and means 'faithful.' That's what our Stumah is, faithful; and if you ever have occasion to test him you'll find it out, too."

The test came unexpectedly, and it was in dead earnest. Late one night Cameron and I were sitting with Ben in his

apartments, when Bill looked in to ask whether there were any commands for the night.

Stumah, stretched in front of the grate on the rug, was taking a cat-nap. As William opened the door he roused and started out for his constitutional with the janitor ; every night he made the last round of the big building with him, just for exercise and good-fellowship.

Down and down and over and through the house they went, William with his bull's-eye and Stumah with his sharp eyes and keen nose ; into the big kitchen where everything was dark ; into the trunk-room where everything was stuffy ; then to the bicycle-room where everything was dusty ; through the laundry where everything was steamy, and so to the engine-room where everything was comfortable and warm.

Then William opened the door leading to the area under the side-walk, where the big coal-bunkers are. A blast of bitter cold air swept in, and with it a big cat whose toes were cold.

None of us are perfect, you know. Stumah loved dearly to chase a cat ; it was his only bad habit. I never knew him to catch a cat, much less to hurt one, but he loved to try, just as little boys love to throw salt at birds' tails.

There was a gathering of Stumah's four feet, a slipping of his paws, a scratching on the cement floor as the cat drew up into a bow-knot and hissed in that perfectly surprised way which all cats affect. Then Stumah sprang at the cat, and the cat sprang through the laundry door and away they went.

William, having seen many such chases before, paid no attention. He stepped into the area-way and threw the blaze of his dark lantern into every nook and corner. And there, behind the iron chute, was an arm sticking out.

"Hey, there !" cried William sternly. "Come out of that ! Come out of that, I tell you !" he repeated, throwing the yellow bull's-eye sharply on the chute and on a sullen, shifty fellow, stumbling now over the big coal-pile, and crawling unwillingly towards the alert William,

"Come over here, you other one!" he cried again, espying a second furtive rascal. "I see you. Come out of that or I'll lift you out by the neck!"

Sure enough, out crawled another knave, and presently stood with his fellow, confronting William, as villainous a pair as ever graced a cell.

This I know, for I myself saw them shortly afterwards, one of them handcuffed and still struggling, the other nearly dead.

"What are you doing here?" asked William sternly.

The smaller of the two thieves answered with cheerful assurance:

"Well, y' see, me aunt cooks in one o' the flats upstairs, an' we just been up visitin' her an'——" With that he jumped on William like a wildcat.

The janitor, a muscular fellow, could have overcome his assailant without much trouble, had not the other fellow immediately sprang at him, and, with a dastardly blow back of the ear, brought him to the floor.

But even then the victory of the thieves was not complete. The big countryman, despite the blows rained on him, struggled to his knees. Without a word the three swayed back and forth in a deadly struggle, but William was even then getting the best of it, when with an oath the smaller thief drew a knife.

But even as the blade glittered in the light which streamed through the open door of the engine-room, Stumah, fresh from his cat-chase, dashed into the vault and sunk his teeth into the murderous wretch.

Now the collie is the most peculiar of all dogs in a fight. Naturally gentle, he is likewise highly sensitive and nervous. It is this characteristic which, oddly enough, makes him the most dreaded of all dogs by those who know him—and everybody should know the collie; I am sorry for the boy who does not.

Be assured the thief knows him. The thief will laugh at the attack of a bulldog or a mastiff, for that is easy to guard

against. With his forearm, he takes the teeth of the bulldog who springs at him. But the arm is heavily padded, and the dog, clinging to it, does no damage, and hangs completely exposed to the marauder's knife or pistol.

Not so the collie; and the midnight prowler would as soon think of picking up a live wire as a healthy collie. The sheep-dog does not sink his teeth into an enemy to hang on till the death. His bite is a continuous snapping; it is like the rapid snipping of scissors. The gentlest of dogs is likewise the most terrible.

Stumah's onset was like a cyclone. The deadly knife descended, but it did not strike William. The collie caught it in his shoulder, and already he was tearing the hand that held it. Man and dog rolled on the flagging. William, freed, throttled the remaining thief, and with the aid of the engineer, who at that moment appeared on the scene, disarmed the fellow and cowed him into submission.

Then the janitor turned to help Stumah, but it was not Stumah who needed the help. His enemy lay stretched on the floor, disabled and terror-stricken.

Stumah, covered with blood, stood over him a remorseless sentinel, ready to rend him again at the least sign of life; but the crafty knave lay like a dead man.

By this time the burglar-alarm, turned on by the engineer, had brought us to the basement, and Ben, running in, caught the excited dog by the collar and held him in leash. Then William secured the murderous fellow and dragged him out into the engine-room. In a few moments the patrol-waggon rumbled up and took one of the desperadoes to the armoury, the other to the hospital.

We got Stumah upstairs in the elevator. He was perfectly quiet, but panting hard, and in his eyes there was an awful light—one I hate to see in any one's eyes; but in this case it was justifiable.

William was cut a little on the neck, where the point of the blade had grazed, but he would not let the doctor even look at his wound until Stumah's hurts were dressed.

Watching the doctor stitch the cut on the shoulder of the faithful dog, William's eyes looked very red.

"I never knew what a friend was till I saw that knife hanging over me and heard Stoom growl," he declared huskily. "Is he very bad, doctor?"

"I'd call it pretty bad if it was your shoulder, but dogs can stand more than men."

"Do you know," demanded William excitedly, turning to us—"do you know why that dog fought so dreadful? Why he cut that man to pieces so quick?"

"Well, I know," he declared, answering his own question. "I know. It's because he knew that fellow. Yes, he did; he knew him. I never recognised the fellow till I saw him in the light in the engine-room; but Stoom knew him all the time."

"Why, what do you mean, William? Who was it?" demanded Ben.

"You mind that fellow that hired me to drive the dog-waggon when I come to town, the fellow that tried to kidnap Stoom? Well, sir, that's the chap Stumah tore downstairs to-night. I recognised him—Connelly, the dog-catcher!"

HOW A RECORD WAS BROKEN.

BY RICHARD BARRY.

WILL STEELE was an auburn-headed boy whose inventive turn of mind gave him little rest; he must be planning something or making something all the time to be completely happy. Mr. Steele had humoured his son in all this for the sake of peace, and had paid the bills for replenishing the stock of the little workshop out in the stable over and over again.

Willie had invented a steam-engine that wouldn't steam, a "duplex clothes-wringer" that tore clothes into nice picturesque rags, and he was at work on the model of a flying-machine when winter came on in earnest, and the splendid skating brought all the town of Ferrisburg out on the river. It was this rage for skating that led Will to invent his first success.

"What's Willie up to now?" inquired the young Principal of the Ferrisburg Academy of Willie's sister. He was on his knees buckling on her skates as he spoke; it was a bright Saturday afternoon, and the river was dotted with swaying, moving forms.

"Oh, he says that he's making a bicycle arrangement that will beat skating hollow," Miss Steele answered, laughing. "But you know," she went on rather deprecatingly, "he's always inventing things that won't work." Sisters sometimes fail to understand ambitious younger brothers.

"Oh, I think he will succeed some day," rejoined the young Principal, as the two joined hands and struck out over the smooth black ice.

Suddenly there was a shout behind them, and they turned about quickly.

"Cæsar's ghost!" exclaimed the young Principal. "Here he comes now!"

Beyond all doubt it was Willie, and beyond all doubt he was coming fast, for his legs shot up and down like piston-rods, and he was leaning over the handle-bar of his bicycle in regular professional fashion. Behind him trailed a line of pursuers, headed by Dean Murray, the fastest skater in the town.

"It's a race," said the Principal, as the crowd swept by them. They could see that the front wheel of the bicycle was held immovable, and was shod with a skatelike runner that kept it straight and steady. The rear wheel did not appear to slip in the slightest, and made a clicking, scratching noise on the ice.

One of the small boys had evidently given up the chase, for he was going smoothly along, with both his short sturdy legs held straight and stiff; he was trying hard to get his breath after his exertion.

"Oh, there's Jimmy Ford!" said Willie's sister. "Jimmy, come here!" she called.

Jimmy changed his direction, and came up closer.

"Yes, it's a race," he panted. "He's racin' Dean to Goose Neck Point. My skates are too dull fur racin'," he added, "but I'm goin' to cut 'cross the meaders; it saves mos' three miles."

"Come on; let's go with him," said the schoolmaster, who was fond of sport; "we will see the end of it."

So they left the smooth river, and, accompanied by several spectators and the timekeeper, hopped, skipped, and skated over the frozen grassy pools of the meadow until they came to the black ice again at Goose Neck Point. The racers were not in sight yet, but they had not long to wait.

"Here they come," shouted Jimmy. "Cricky! I wish my skates were sharp."

Around the point they came, the bicycle with the boy in the blue suit leading. The crowd had thinned out in numbers, and only two of the skaters seemed to have the slightest

chance ; it was only a quarter of a mile farther to the winning-post, and Dean Murray began to creep up. Faster worked the blue legs, and quicker and stronger came the strokes of Dean's long-bladed skates. It was nip and tuck now, Willie bobbing his head up and down, and Dean bending low, and swinging his arms straight across his body like two pendulums. Only one hundred yards, and he was right at Willie's back wheel, then almost even, then—a shout from the spectators! Dean's heels flew up, and down he sat, as Jimmy Ford expressed it, "Jest as if he'd wanted to be funny." Bicycle and skater slid across the line together, and the official timekeeper (who was also the starter), shouted out, "Dead heat!" Then he looked at his stop-watch closely and announced that the record was broken.

"Let us look at your wheel, Willie," said the Principal, as he made his way through the cheering crowd.

"Yes, sir," answered the hero. "It's perfectly simple; wait till I get my wind and I'll tell you about it."

Although it was a crisp, cold day, Willie's face was moist, and he chewed a piece of ice as if it was a luxury. After a pause he went on:

"It's perfectly simple. This curved runner is clamped on the front tire; the wheel can't move, you see, because it's fixed. Now the back wheel is covered—that is, the tire and felloe—with these metal bands fitting on in sections; see, they can't slip, and these eighth-of-an-inch spikes take right hold of the ice. You never felt anything run so smooth in your life, and you can turn a sharp corner without your wheels slipping from under you the way they usually do when they run on anything slippery. I call this my 'Ice-cycle.'"

"It was a mighty good race," said the timekeeper.

"Yes," said Willie; "perhaps Dean would have won if he hadn't fallen." Then he mounted his wheel and rode away, turning about here and there like a swallow, the crowd still watching him.

"Willie's a great inventurer," mused Jimmy Ford. "He's mos' as good as Ed'son. I wish my skates were sharp."

WILL DORMAN'S GUN.

BY JOHN HABBERTON.

IT was not Will's gun, though he had long thought of it as his own, for he had promised to buy it from Charley Perrin, who owned it, and he had devoted nearly a year to accumulating the price which had been agreed upon as purchase-money. Guns were numerous in the county in which Will lived, on the western side of the Mississippi River; indeed, they were necessary, for in a sparsely settled farming district there are no butchers' shops, and when fresh meat is wanted for the table, and the family is tired of chicken, some one must go out with a gun and find it, as usually he does.

There are guns and guns, however, and Will, ever since he had become old enough to be trusted to shoot, had found his father's true but old-fashioned rifle terribly heavy. Like the rifles of most Western farmers a few years ago, it had a barrel as thick as a crow-bar, although the bore would not admit a full-sized pea; on the scales of the store-keeper in the village on the river-bank five miles away it weighed a little more than fourteen pounds, while the new-fashioned breech-loading rifle of which Will's village friend Charley Perrin had become tired after bringing it from the east a year or two before, weighed only half as much, carried a heavier bullet, and could be loaded without ramrod, loose ammunition, or "patching" for the bullet.

When Charley had agreed to sell that rifle Will had immediately "bound the bargain" by paying a part in advance, which the village store-keeper had just given him for two coon-skins, and he had agreed to pay the remainder within a year,

the gun not to be delivered until the entire sum was paid. Cash was very hard to get, as it is in all farming communities in the West, and Will was too manly to be assisted by his father, for he was too frequent a member of the family councils not to know that Mr. Dorman had great trouble in making both ends meet, and in paying the interest on the mortgage with which his farm, like most other Western farms, was encumbered. He picked berries and walked the long, dusty summer road to sell them; occasionally he earned a little by a day's fishing for "buffalo" in the river; and he had increased his savings largely by selling two or three fine wild turkeys which he shot with his father's rifle.

Christmas was close at hand; the purchase of the gun must be concluded by New-Year's Day, and Will sat on the barnyard fence one morning thinking profoundly. His twelve-year-old brother Harry approached him, first failing to attract Will's attention by throwing an apple.

"You're thinking of that gun; I know it by your looks," said Harry.

"You're about half right," was the reply; "yes, fully three-quarters right."

"I wouldn't worry over it, if I were you. Charley's a decent fellow, and when he sees how much money you've saved, he'll give you a month or two longer."

"Yes, I suppose so," said Will; "though I did intend to make that gun my Christmas present to myself. The disappointment isn't all that troubles me, though. Haven't you noticed, Harry, how hard father works now in all kinds of weather, and never spends a penny on himself when he can help it? He always manages to give each of us a Christmas present every year, and to give something nice to mother. He never forgets us on our birthdays. But he never has good clothes to wear, and he looks worried most of the time when he isn't chatting with us. Haven't you seen it?"

"Why, no," said Harry.

"I can't blame you," Will replied. "I'm three years older than you, but it never struck me until this winter. Last night

I overheard him talking with mother about the leg boots of thick India-rubber of that insurance agent who came here last week. He said he believed that if he could have a pair of boots like those, his life would be prolonged five years. He often gets soaked above his knees while ditching our swampland, you know, that's so rich when it's drained, but so dreadful to work in where there's still ditching to do. He couldn't get those boots out of his mind. Mother asked him why he didn't buy a pair; but he said the store-keeper in the village hadn't any, and there was no money and time to get them elsewhere. The agent bought them at Grantsville, fifty miles up the river, and paid a good price for them."

"It's too bad!" murmured Harry.

"Harry," exclaimed Will, springing from the fence, and speaking through his closed teeth, "I'm going to give up that gun, and buy father a pair of those boots for a Christmas present. It'll be a great surprise to him. I hope it won't be dangerous, but t'will be the first surprise of the kind from his boys."

"So it will," assented the younger boy. "But to think of giving up that gun that you've wanted so long, and worked so hard for!"

"Don't say any more about it," exclaimed Will, "or you'll weaken me. It isn't going to be easy, I can tell you, much as I love father. You must help me now just a little. I'm going to walk to town—it's only five miles—to see Charley Perrin about the gun. I'm really going to see him about it. This is the day the river packet goes up to Grantsville. If it comes down too late, I'm going to spend the night with Charley, so if I don't get home, you tell father and mother. But don't say a word about the boots."

"Going to Grantsville!" drawled Harry. "Why, even father has never been 'way up there."

"I know it. But there's no other way to get the boots. The fare will be one shilling each way, but there 'll be enough money left to buy them."

"Buy what?"

"The boots, stupid. I wish you could understand how I

feel. Don't feel bad ; I didn't mean to be unkind ; but I'm just like father, I can't keep anything on my mind but those boots. Don't leak, now ; don't let anything make you tell."

Harry promised, and helped Will prepare enough luncheon to last two days ; then the elder brother began picking his way beside the muddy road to the village. Arrived there, Will visited the real owner of the gun, and offered two shillings for the use of Charley's rifle for a day or two. The owner, who had been informed from month to month of the increase of the purchase money, kindly offered the use of the gun for nothing ; but Will insisted upon paying, and would accept no compromise. He did not expect to use it—he merely wanted it in his possession for a few hours, to look at, admire, and then give up for ever. With the gun in his hand, he sauntered toward the outskirts of the town, from which he hurried back, when he heard the whistle of the approaching packet. Some boys at the landing asked pointed questions, but fortunately the boat put off quickly. The landing plank had just been hauled in, when the Captain noticed a half-grown boy with a small rifle and a shrinking attitude, so he shouted :

"Here, youngster, who are you ? Where are you going ? To shoot buffaloes and Indians ?"

"No, sir," replied Will, trying to be indignant, though his voice trembled. "I'm going to Grantsville—on family business."

"Umph ! What sort of family business do you attend to with a gun ? I haven't heard of any family feuds along this river."

"I'm going to buy something for my father, sir—a Christmas present," said Will, who feared he might be put ashore. "I had the gun with me when the boat whistled."

"You did, eh ? Expect me to take you up for nothing ?"

"No, sir," Will replied, his face flushing as he regained his self-control. Then he drew from his pocket a handful of coin, for his savings had all been in small sums.

"All right. Don't feel bad," growled the Captain. "Most boys who've come aboard my boat have made trouble for me or some one else, so I have to be particular."

The scenery along the smaller tributaries of the Mississippi is seldom of a quality to attract the attention of a boy, so Will Dorman, after studying the steamer's cabin a few moments, found a secluded place on the guards, and gave himself up to mournful contemplation of the gun which he so long had intended should be his own. It never had seemed prettier and more desirable than under the morning sun of that December day. The slender grace of the barrel, the sharp edge of the forward sight, the lines of the stock, and even the click of the hammer spring had never before seemed so entirely as they should be. He tried to make fun of the piece, to assure himself that he soon would be too big to carry so small a gun, but the attempt was a failure.

The boat reached Grantsville about dusk, and the boy had a sneaking hope that the stores might be closed, for the Captain had said he should not lie there more than two or three hours. But the stores, when Will found them, were brightly lighted. They surrounded the four sides of a square, and boots were visible through the windows of several of them. Will finally entered one, selected a pair of rubber boots that seemed long enough to reach any man's waist, tested the size by a measure he had brought with him, and paid for them. As the storekeeper counted over the money Will looked at the gun with a reproachful as well as longing face. Then he gazed at the boots with a puzzled air.

"The best way to carry boots like that," said the storekeeper, as he cut a bit of stout twine, and passed it through the loops, "is to tie them together, and sling them over your shoulder—so." Then he suited the action to the word by putting them on Will's shoulder, one hanging in front and one behind.

"I feel as if I were carrying a coffin for the gun," thought Will, as he left the store. "I'd put the gun into one or the other if it didn't feel so comfortable in my hands. Dear little rifle! Well, father is worth a great deal more, though I never knew until to-day how much he really was worth."

"Hello, youngster!" shouted the Captain, as Will reappeared in the steamer's cabin.

"Boots, where are you going with that boy?" added the clerk.

"Here, Jaykes, don't tease the little chap," said the Captain. "I say, boy, you're the fellow who came up this morning. Said you were going to buy a Christmas present for your father—eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is them it?"

Will thought he could improve the Captain's grammar, but he discreetly replied, "Yes, sir."

"Well, I vow!" exclaimed the Captain, examining the enormous foot-wear. "I've three boys, each of them bigger than you, but none of them ever thought to do so much for me at Christmas. Where do they raise boys like you?"

Will laughed, and felt proud. To be praised by a steam-boat Captain out West used to be a greater honour than to have seen a king—at least boys thought so.

"Take good care of 'em, sonny," continued the Captain, continuing to look at the boots as if there was something unusual about them. "Got a room?"

"No, sir," Will replied, suddenly losing his pride. "I didn't think I needed one just for a night."

"Well, you don't. Pile your boots and gun in my room—right there. Lie down on my lounge if you get sleepy, though I don't believe boys ever sleep when they're on a river steamer."

Will thanked the Captain, hid the boots and gun under the lounge, and went out on deck to get some food from his pockets and eat it. Afterward he roamed about the boat until the down-river trip began. It seemed to him he never could sleep, for the noise of loading and stowing the cargo was almost deafening. Suddenly, however, after staring into the furnace doors for a few minutes, he staggered up stairs, fell asleep, and thought it was only a few moments later when he awoke to find sunbeams streaming through the state-room window, and the Captain saying,

"Better come out and take a cup of coffee with us, youngster."

But daylight and wakefulness brought back his sense of loss of the rifle. The steamer was descending the river rapidly, for a little Western boat. Will learned, on inquiry, that he was already half-way home. In a few hours he must give up the gun for ever, unless by telling the whole truth to Charley Perrin he might get an extension of time, and make a new start with the few cents that remained in his pocket. Other boys wanted that gun, and Charley, though the son of well-to-do parents, wanted money for Christmas. Well, he would see as much as possible of it while he could. With this thought he dragged the treasure from under the lounge, went on deck, and sat down with the rifle on his knees, his hands resting upon it as if they would caress it.

Suddenly the boat stopped. She was approaching the head of Blue Bluff Bar, a bit of the river which shifted from time to time, and had to be approached cautiously except when the water was high. Men stood on the guards forward, casting the lead at each side, and reporting to the Captain, who leaned over the rail beside the pilot-house. The few passengers sauntered forward, and exchanged stories of the freaks of Western rivers, with no stone at bottom or on the banks. The boat, with only headway enough to obey her rudder, glided so close to the shore that the boughs of the overhanging sycamore-trees seemed almost to brush the tops of her smoke-stacks.

Suddenly Will's heart beat wildly. Could he be mistaken? No. Among some cottonwood sapling on the shore, apparently about two hundred yards down stream, he saw a deer's antlers. There could be no mistake about it, for he had several times before seen deer, though never when he had a gun. How he wished he had asked Charley for some cartridges! Stay! had he not been carrying some belonging to that very rifle in his pocket for months—carrying them until they were worn as bright as his mother's copper tea-kettle?

To put one into the rifle, drop upon one knee, and rest the gun in the angle formed by the guard and a stanchion, was the work of only a second or two. The boat was heading

almost for the cottonwoods, and Will could see the animal's side, the head being turned toward the boat. Will hesitated a second as to whether to aim at the shoulder, or where he had learned the heart should be ; then he fired.

"What's wrong below there?" roared the Captain, leaving his post for a moment and looking over the side.

"I've shot a deer!" shouted Will—"a big buck! Hurrah!" Then, regardless of the several pairs of eyes fixed upon him, he patted the rifle-barrel approvingly.

"Nonsense!" the Captain growled. "I hope you haven't killed a man by mistake. Boys are always——"

"'Twas a deer," Will insisted. "I saw his horns; then I saw all of him. Oh, Captain, do let me take that little boat that's dragging behind, and go and get him!"

"Nonsense!" again growled the Captain. Then he exchanged some words with the pilot, and continued: "Go ahead, if any one will help you. Don't waste any time, though. We'll be through here in five minutes, unless we get aground, and I'm not going to 'round to' in this water for all the deer in the Mississippi Valley. Make time, now!"

Two passengers hurried away with Will, and in a moment they were ashore, for the boat had been drifting steadily down stream; in the cottonwoods they found a dead buck, and by the time they got him into the skiff they agreed with Will that he was a big one. Almost as soon as he was brought alongside and the deck-hands lifted him aboard, the steamer reached deep water, and the Captain came below to inspect the game.

"What splendid antlers!" exclaimed a passenger, who wore very good clothes.

"He's a fine fat one," observed the Captain, after resting his foot on the carcass a moment. "What are you going to do with him, youngster?"

"Take him home, I suppose," said Will, not knowing what else to say, and being too excited to think.

"I'll give you a pound for his head and antlers, if you don't want them," said the well-dressed passenger.

Will's heart jumped.

"I'll give you a pound for the rest of him, and you may keep his tail to wear in your hat," said the Captain.

Will's heart jumped again, and he said—almost screamed—"It's a bargain!"

It seemed to him almost as many hours as it really was seconds before the money was in his hand and then in his pocket, and all that while he was holding the rifle as tightly as if it were the hand of an old friend newly found. He had carried the precious piece ashore with him, in case the deer might need another shot to kill him; he had held it close as one of the passengers rowed the skiff back, but now that he had the money which would make him its owner, it seemed dearer to him than ever. Although he had been carefully taught not to talk to other people about his own affairs, he was wild to tell the Captain, the passengers, and the crew the whole story of that gun; but he was stopped by the Captain, who, as he removed the tail of the deer and put it into the boy's hat band, remarked,

"First deer you ever shot—eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"I knew it. Got 'buck fever' bad—signs all over you. Got it after you fired, though, instead of before. That's the right way to take it; won't make you lose your aim. Good stuff in you, youngster, if you take care of it. I wish my boys—Say, Mr. Brown, just—" and the Captain made an excuse to go forward.

The village boys, whose curiosity had not been gratified about Will's up-river trip, were all at the landing when the steamer returned, and many other boys were with them. There was a loud chorus of "Boots!" as Will went ashore, but the boy had the air of a man as he explained that he had merely been to Grantsville to buy some boots which his father needed, but could not go for. Then he hurried to the house of Charley Perrin, and made himself the owner of the long-coveted gun. It seemed that he could not wait two hours to tell his brother the glorious news. As for keeping

the boots hidden until Christmas Day, agony would be no name for the suspense. Nevertheless, he was quite happy as he tramped homeward, and promised himself to go over the road again next day, and spend his remaining money for a Christmas present for his mother. Finally, he felt so sure of his darling gun that he dropped it into one of the boots. Nearing home, he went across lots, so as to hide his father's present in the barn; but as he entered the barn door he found himself face to face with Mr. Dorman and Harry.

The father stared and exclaimed, "Where on earth did you get those boots, son?"

"He's been to Grantsville for them," shouted Harry, clapping his hands in glee. "He bought them for your Christmas present with the money he's been saving up for a year to buy Charley Perrin's rifle with."

Mr. Dorman looked so astonished that Will felt guilty instead of happy, until his father said, very slowly, as if he was troubled at finding words:

"I know what these have cost you, my dear boy. When they wear out, I'll keep the remains of them as long as I live. But I'm very sorry you lost your gun. I worked and saved for my first rifle, and the memory of it has come back to me since you began to want Charley's."

"But I haven't lost it!" As Will spoke, he took the rifle from its hiding-place, and told the story of the deer, at which his father looked remarkably happy, while Harry stood amazed. Then all three went to the house, and everything was told anew to the mother, who held one of her husband's hands tightly in her own, and looked as mothers always do when their boys display manliness.

THE PET OF THE REGIMENT.

BY E. M. TRAQUAIR.

WHEN the Franco-German War broke out all Germany was in a state of the wildest excitement. There were many old people still living who remembered the former great Napoleonic wars, and the terrible times when the French overran the country. Who could foresee whether these times would not return? The army was got into marching order; the women worked night and day to get their husbands' and brothers' kits ready in time, and the children paraded the streets singing the "Watch on the Rhine."

My regiment was among the first to be ordered to France. Arrangements for the start were made as rapidly as possible. When we were all packed into the cars, and the train, amid the sobs of the women and the hurrahs of the men, began to move slowly out of the station, a boy of about twelve or thirteen years old, a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked rogue, sprang with cat-like elasticity into the car where I was standing.

He landed almost in my arms. It was contrary to all rule to take him with us, but my heart was sore at leaving home, and I felt almost as if he had been sent to me. I took a fancy to the boy at first sight, and, in spite of all the railway guards said, I succeeded in keeping him with me, and consequently with the regiment.

He was now one of "ours," and shared all our dangers, privations, and heavy marches. He ran errands for us, laid our dinners, lit the bivouac fires. He was very unselfish and kind-hearted, and endeared himself so much to the rough

soldiers that he was soon the acknowledged "pet of the regiment." He never seemed to feel fatigue. After a long day's march I have seen him run hither and thither, fetch water, kindle fire, or spread his cloak over some tired soldier, chatting merrily all the while. He seemed a little Robold, capable of being in two places at once.

When the hard fighting began, and hardship and privation increased, we wanted to send the little fellow back to Germany. But he himself would not hear of it. "If I am too small to fight for my country myself," he used to say, "I can at least help those who do. When we have beaten the French and taught them to mind their own business, I'll go back with you, not before."

Well, it so came about that we were quartered in a French village. This was after the first great battle of Wörth, when we succeeded in driving the enemy from our frontiers. The inhabitants had already fled, all, at least, except a few old people who seemed too indifferent to take the trouble of bestirring themselves. Suddenly we received orders from head-quarters to send every one out of the village.

This seemingly cruel command was given with the intention of protecting the poor old creatures, as, in case we should have to retreat, the place would be fired in order to hinder the enemy from making it a point of vantage against us. A beacon pole was erected behind the village, and a heavy battery had orders to play on the devoted place, and lay it in ashes, as soon as the signal should be given by lighting this pole.

This was in the afternoon. Towards evening a detachment of troops entered the village noiselessly. Fritz was with them. The captain had strict orders to search the village from house to house to make sure that every one had left it, and that nothing of value was destroyed. I went with him on his rounds.

We came to a substantial two-storied house, in the upper window of which a faint light was burning. We went in, groped our way up a dark staircase, and entered a large room

heaped up with all sorts of articles. In their midst sat an old woman with a hard, wrinkled face, staring fixedly at the wall.

"Woman," I cried, "why are you sitting here? Have you not heard the order to quit the village?"

"What do I care for your orders!" she replied, in a harsh, deep voice. "This is my own house, and I mean to stay in it."

"But the place is going to be fired, and you will be buried under the ruins. It is to save your life that we have come; and if you won't listen to reason and go of your own accord, we must try force."

"Just try it," cried the strange creature. "Turn me out of my own house like a dog if you will; I'll return to it when you are gone. Kill me if you like, but I shall stay."

I saw there was no use in saying anything more to her, and I had no time for it, besides. There was little chance of the bombardment taking place till morning, so she was safe till then. We returned, leaving all quiet.

About half an hour later Fritz entered the guard-room. He planted himself right in front of me with a sort of half-embarrassed air.

"Well, Fritz," I said, "and so you are not sleeping yet? What is the matter, my boy?"

"There is nothing the matter," he said; "only Louis is here, and I can't make out what he wants."

Louis was a pretty slender boy of about Fritz's age, only not so strong. He was no stranger to us, as he belonged to a neighbouring village where we had been in quarters shortly before. I sent for him at once.

"Why are you here, Louis?" I said, when he was brought in. "Boys like you ought to be in bed, and not in dangerous places like this!"

"My grandmother is here in the village all alone," he said frankly. "I've come to fetch her!"

"Your grandmother!" said I. "Is that the old lady in the house yonder with the two lime-trees before the door?"

"Yes, that is her house."

"Well, you'll have your trouble for nothing, I can tell you. She told me that nothing should make her leave the house."

"I shall try, at any rate. My mother will be very unhappy should anything happen to grandmother."

I took the boy to his grandmother's house. Louis told me, as we went along, that she was a strange old woman, by no means poor, but that she had quarrelled with all her family, and for years had not entered his parents' house. His mother had often taken him to see her, but he noticed that she had a strong dislike to his father.

We reached the house. Light was still glimmering in the upper room, and the door was open. As soon, however, as we began to mount the dark stairs I heard the sound of a key being turned in the lock. The old woman had locked the door in our faces.

Louis implored her to let him in, saying he had a message to her from his mother. On hearing this she opened the door.

"You have come to fetch *me*," she said, with a softened look. "You have taken a deal of trouble to no purpose, as I mean to stay where I am."

"You surely don't mean to stay till the Prussians shoot your house down about your ears?"

"Why not? The Prussians have beaten our armies, and the cowards have fled. But I, a poor old woman, mean to defy them. Let them beat down my house if they like. It is my own. Here I am, and here I mean to stay."

"In that case I shall stay too," said the boy, decidedly.

"You!" said the old woman, wonderingly, her hard features assuming a softer expression. "You are too young to be food for powder. Go home to your mother."

"Not without you, grandmother," said the boy.

Her face became almost tender. "Take the boy away," she said, turning to me. "He could almost persuade me against my will."

"He'll not go unless you go, I can see that," said I. "So

you had better leave the place with him, if you do not wish him to be killed."

"Is it true, then, that the village is to be destroyed?"

"The order for it may be given at any minute."

"Very well, then, I will go, but not till morning. You can stay here, Louis. There is room enough for us both. But what am I to do with my things?"

I advised her to make up all her most valuable things in a bundle, and let her grandson carry it. Then I impressed on Louis the necessity of being off at as early an hour as possible next morning. As I left the room, I heard the key turning again in the lock.

We noticed by various signs in the enemy's camp that there was something brewing against us. What it was we could not tell. One thing only was certain, and that was action on the morrow.

When the sun rose there was a thick grey mist over everything. When it cleared away, the French came toward us, with wild hurrahs, to storm our position.

We were prepared for them. We let them come on half-way, and then let off a salvo so well aimed that they stopped, and threw themselves into a trench, from whence they rained bullets on us.

We were too well covered, however, to suffer much. But their attack on our left wing was more fortunate. After a short, gallant defence, overpowered by numbers, it was obliged to retreat. The danger now became great for us, as the enemy crowded more and more to the front. The word was given for a general retreat. Whilst our little detachment, fighting and taking advantage of every cover, withdrew slowly from the village, I went, accompanied by a sergeant, to the beacon pole. My orders were to light it the moment the village should be free from our people.

Just at this moment Fritz came running up to say that Louis and his grandmother, whom I believed to be already far away, were still in the village.

"Run and see," I said to the good little fellow. "If they

are really still there, send them off instantly. They are lost else."

We could easily see the old woman's house from where we were standing. Fritz ran, swift as a young deer, across the open field, over which the enemy, now rapidly approaching, were sowing bullets plentifully.

Our situation was growing more critical with every moment. In spite of the attention required for the enemy's movements, I could not help looking uneasily toward the house into which Fritz had disappeared.

He came out at last, but—alone! His usual merry smile was changed into a look of fear and anxiety as he rushed up to us, screaming at the top of his voice:

"An axe! an axe! The lock is hampered. They can't get out."

One of the soldiers in the trench started forward, threw him an axe, and, quick as thought, returned to his post. The brave boy caught it up, and, heavy as it was, darted off with it across the dangerous path for the second time.

"Quick, Fritz, quick!" I called after him. "In two minutes the beacon must be lit."

My reminder was unnecessary. Anxiety for the prisoners, and more especially for his playmate, added wings to his feet. I was getting very anxious about all three, but more especially about my own gallant boy. Three lives hung from a thread. The heavy battery on the heights beyond was only waiting for the signal to open its terrible fire on the devoted village.

The enemy, who had been comparatively quiet for a little, now began to advance again. Some of my people still held the last solitary house in the village. It was high time to call them back. When this was done the moment was come to light the beacon, and Fritz was still in the fatal house.

Used as I was to the horrors of war, it was a terrible moment for me. The sergeant stood beside me waiting my orders. I hesitated for one minute before saying the word which would be equal to a sentence of death for three innocent

beings, in no way connected with the great quarrel now being fought out between two nations.

"Light the beacon at once!" called the colonel, galloping up at this moment.

"God help them!" thought I, with a shudder.

The flames licked the straw-clad pole. Almost immediately after, a report from the battery guns seemed to crash into my very brain. The great balls hissed over our heads, and fell crashing on the roofs of the village houses, already beginning to fill with the enemy. Every shot told; but the house on which all our looks were fastened was still untouched.

Still Fritz did not appear. A second salvo was given as destructive as the first. The next house but one was hit. From its shattered roof arose clouds of dust and smoke. Still the walls that sheltered those three were spared.

"Where is Fritz? He's lost!" sounded on all sides.

"No—there he is! He's saved! Thank God! Bravo, Fritz!"

There he was indeed. He had just stepped out of the house. Close behind him came the two whom his heroic courage had saved from certain death.

On he came, nodding to us and smiling. They were scarcely six paces from the house when the terrible shot reached it also and levelled it with the ground.

But the three fugitives were by no means yet out of the reach of danger. Bullets were raining on all sides of them. The space they were crossing was completely unprotected. Fritz, careless about himself, showed himself most eagerly desirous of getting his protégés as quickly out of the reach of the bullets as was possible. He was carrying the old woman's bundle, while Louis helped her along. Onward they hurried in the direction of the other village, where the battery was erected. Soon, however, I lost sight of them, as I had other things to attend to than looking after the fugitives.

It was a brave deed and it might have ended very badly for its gallant little performer, but, thank God, all three escaped safely. Better still, Fritz's bravery and unselfish conduct had

their reward. The story came to be talked about in the army. It got to the ears of the gallant leader and Crown Prince. He interested himself, after the war was over, for his poor little orphan namesake. His kindness got him a free place in the cadet school of Berlin, where he studied military tactics, and passed an examination brilliant enough to do credit to his royal patron. And he rose fast in his profession without losing any of the good qualities that endeared him to us in his low estate.

THE LAST CHARIOT RACE.

BY VALENTINE ADAMS.

PART I.

THE sculptor was gazing gloomily upon the Last Chariot Race.

He was by no means in a happy mood. The Last Chariot Race weighed upon him. And no wonder; for the Last Chariot Race is nothing more nor less than the artist's model for that famous three-horse bronze group since placed on top of the Live-stock Exchange, and from the moment of its elevation one of the famous ornaments of the famous city. Well might such a mass weigh upon any one! At the time I mean, however, the group had not attained its present "commanding bulk of imperishable bronze" (I quote the papers); it was still in its earlier plaster days, and only four feet high. Even then it was no light matter; people who know about such things look upon the small plaster model for a great bronze group as a very important affair, and from first to last this Chariot Race cost the sculptor a deal of thinking as well as thumbing.

All winter long he had been working out his conception of the theme. First he modelled in wax half a dozen small studies, embodying as many different ideas. From these studies he chose one, upon whose general lines he then made a carefully considered clay study, four feet high. Now any good suggestion of a chariot race must contain at least three ingredients: man, beast, and vehicle. As the sculptor

was not of those who put the cart before the horse, he had taken time by the forelock, and during his previous summer in the country had made many studies of steeds, spirited and otherwise. As for the chariot, that was a matter of history and of taste.

Not least in importance was the chariot driver, for whom a model was found in the person of young Raphael Antonini. Many a weary hour had this youth spent upon the model stand, gripping his chariot reins in his left hand, and occasionally waving his right arm in sign of victory! What made it harder to bear was that the three horses were reduced to one, and that one was—a saw-horse; a pair of dingy strings served as chariot reins. Studio chariot-driving is tame business; and Raphael was always glad when, on Saturday, Tom, the sculptor's son, would step gingerly into the room in quest of sport. Sometimes, with an air of superlative meekness, Tom would ask for a hammer to nail up vines in the conservatory, or a bit of rope for the laundress's clothes-line; and if his father were not looking he would mingle pleasure with business by tickling Raphael's bare leg with the rope end, or, better still, by flinging sly pellets of wet clay at him.

For the present, however, Raphael's trials were over. The study, finished in clay and cast in plaster, was now ready for the committee to see. Meanwhile the sculptor himself looked at his work with a severity not dreamed of in the philosophy of committees.

"No," he muttered aloud, "I am not satisfied! I've worked hard on it, but I haven't got there! I almost wish the committee wouldn't accept the thing; or, at any rate, would give me the chance to try again!"

Pierre, the studio helper, a fat little Frenchman, listened in respectful silence. Fine odd jobs were Pierre's forte; but he loved art also. This jack-of-all-trades had a profound admiration for his master, a master of one. He believed the model of the Chariot Race to be perfect. Far otherwise was it with Jim, errand-boy and sweeper, commonly called

the Destroyer, on account of the havoc wrought by his broom-handle. Jim's duties were light but varied, and can best be described by his own words. "Are you the janitor?" a caller once asked. "No, I ain't the janitor exactly," Jim had replied, "but I do about all the janiting that's done here!" Jim had small reverence for art; and when his master declared the study was not all it should be, Jim, for his part, was quite inclined to agree with him.

"Well, Pierre," said the sculptor at last, "you and Jim might as well give the place a thorough cleaning this morning. I'm going out, and sha'n't be back till three, when I expect the committee. I wish you'd clean up that *selle* a little," he continued, pointing to the battered and spattered oak stand that supported the group. "We don't want to insult the committee gratuitously. You might remove just a few of those outside layers of clay and plaster. Better put the study in some safe place, and give the whole stand a drenching."

"Bien, monsieur," was Pierre's cheerful reply; "bien. Rest tranquil; all shall be as you wish."

"Boss is feeling a little blue to-day," suggested Jim when the sculptor had gone.

"Blue," retorted the faithful Pierre. "No wonder he feel blue and many ozzer color encore. You, who know nozing of art, of ze grand lines, you comprehend nozing; but I—I comprehend. Despatch yourself quickly now; zweep ze floor; and when you have zweep't, wash him."

Softly mimicking his superior's imperfect English, the Destroyer set about his tasks. Pierre himself had much to do. First and foremost, there were the drinks to be distributed, for work in clay must be kept very moist to avoid shrinking and cracking. Pierre, armed with a garden syringe and a huge stone pitcher of water, sprinkled assiduously: a double dose for the two great angels, because they were nearest to the radiators; a goodly portion for the equestrian statue of General Blank, whose clay charger was a very thirsty animal; and a light delicate spray for the bas-relief portrait

of a lady. After being watered, each work was swathed in wet rags, and covered with its own special case of rubber cloth. Pierre performed these offices with the pious zeal which made him invaluable in the studio. When he had finished, it was one o'clock, and time for lunch. Jim was hastening away to observe this rite, when he was called back by Pierre, who needed his help in moving the Last Chariot Race.

But where could it be put? All the heavier stands and shelves were occupied, and as for the floor, that was still wet from the Destroyer's overflowing mop. Besides, Pierre had an eye for effect. There was that tall, flat, empty packing-case; why not stand it on end right in front of the great dark curtain at the rear of the studio, and then set the group on top? A good idea! The packing-case is soon placed in position, the oak stand with its precious burden is carefully wheeled up alongside, and by the joint action of all Jim's muscle and all Pierre's skill the study shifted from the stand to the box. *Voilà!* Pierre steps back, back, back, after the manner of his master, and views the effect at long range. He finds it superb. The tall box is perhaps a trifle unsteady; to guard against accidents he inserts a little wedge under one corner. As he hastens away to lunch he gives one last glance at the "effect," fondly hoping that in his absence the master may return, and on seeing the study in a new light, be comforted.

"Afraid of your da-ad! Afraid of your da-ad!"

This boyish shaft was shot through a knot-hole in the high fence, and fell with due effect into the sculptor's back yard. Though aimed in mischief rather than in malice, it certainly wounded the feelings of Tom, the sculptor's son, who was improving the shining hours of the April afternoon by teaching a new trick to Bonaparte, the hound. The accusation from over the fence had come in answer to Tom's curt refusal to admit Jack Emery into the studio.

"Afrai-aid! Afrai-aid!" repeated the mocking voice.

Shin over here and I'll show you whether I'm afraid," retorted Tom angrily. Bonaparte growled in unison.

Now Tom was not a coward. Why, he was the lad who swam out so far and fast and saved two lives the time when that ninny of a Newcomb boy capsized in the bay. At the riding-school he had a great name for valour. But Tom, like most boys of fourteen, had one bugbear; it was a word—the word *afraid*. He quivered at the very thought of being called a coward. In this respect, you see, he was no braver than the little school-girl who shrieks when a spider falls on her hair.

Evidently his challenge was to be accepted; a brilliantly striped jockey-cap appeared above the fence, followed in due course by a face, in which you mostly saw a pair of black eyes set in a wilderness of freckles, and a grin whose spread was providentially checked by two generous ears. Presently Jack Emery, in jersey and knickerbockers, stood revealed on top of the fence, and swung his arms in preparation for a plunge into the sculptor's back yard.

In spite of the freckles and the grin, perhaps because of these, everybody liked Jack Emery, or Monkey Emery, as he was known in intimate circles. This title was given him not only in honour of his prowess in scrambling over the most forbidding fences, but also on account of his gift for getting others into mischief, from which he alone emerged unscathed.

Jack was a new-comer in this quiet city neighbourhood. He had never once seen the inside of the studio, that strange long low building next door to his father's house. Curiosity was large in Jack; he longed with all his soul to set foot in those unknown precincts. From his room in the top story he had often taken a bird's-eye view of the premises, but the four huge skylights told no tales. Sometimes the great front doors of the studio would open, and two or three panting porters, watched by the lynx-eyed Pierre, would bear out some effigy in bronze or marble or plaster. Then would Monkey peer in curiously, but these glimpses

only whetted his longing. Once, stepping within the vestibule, and gazing far down the long room, he saw the sculptor take up the garden syringe and throw a spray of water upon the work before him. What fun it would be to chase some stray cat up and down that room, squirting, meanwhile, upon the fugitive the largest spray of water that syringe might produce, or you might let two of 'em get fighting and then squirt! What rare sport a fellow could have shying pebbles at those little figures arranged in a row on that long shelf! What a fine place a studio must be for archery, and roller-skating, and gymnastics, and good times generally!

But perhaps you think I have left Jack Emery too long on the fence. Bless you, he has descended before this, as the bruised heads of the April dandelions will testify. He has made friends again with Bonaparte, and has even mollified Tom by a change of tactics.

"Makes you mad to be called afraid, doesn't it?" he was saying. "Well, I don't blame you. I've heard the fellows say so often that you weren't afraid of anything, that I thought sure you'd know I was joking."

"Some jokes go down, and some don't," said Tom sulkily.

For answer, Jack pulled a small black object from his pocket. "Seen my educated turtle?" he inquired, in an off-hand manner.

"Where did you get him?" demanded Tom.

Jack set the turtle down on the grass in front of Bonaparte. "I got him from my cousin George. He lives in the country near a river where's a lot of them. This one is pretty tame. Come here, Snapper, and show your paces."

Jack passed a cord through two little holes in the turtle's shell. Tom looked on with increasing interest as Snapper moved away with all convenient speed as far as his length of cord would permit.

"What will you take for him?" asked Tom, who had not outgrown a liking for queer pets.

"I'll give him to you for nothing," replied the generous Monkey, "if you'll just show me the inside of your father's studio."

A shade crossed Tom's brow. "Father doesn't like to have a gang of fellows let loose among his things," said he.

"But I ain't a *gang*, am I?" retorted Monkey. "Did he ever tell you not to let *me* in?"

"No," admitted Tom, "he never mentioned *you*!"

"Then," said Jack, in triumph, "of course you can take me in, and have the turtle to keep."

Tom looked longingly at the prize. How glossy his back was, divided off into those irregular little hexagons!

With what a disdainful air he thrust out his neck! How haughtily he retreated into his house! And how well one's initials would look carved on his smooth yellow under-shell! There would be room for the date, too, and then he would be useful as well as ornamental, for fifty years afterward somebody might find him, and on seeing the date might guess his age, and thereby science would be greatly advanced.

Tom hesitated; science and the hexagons conquered. "If I let you in," said he, "you must not touch a thing, that's flat!"

"I don't *intend* to touch a thing," replied Monkey, virtuously.

"And you mustn't set the dog on anything either," cautioned Tom. "Bonaparte will behave if you do." Leading Bonaparte by the collar, Tom showed the way to the little back door of the studio. He half hoped to find it locked, so that he would be forced to return to the path of rectitude. Alas! the door was ajar, and the boys entered. They found themselves in a queer little place, half work-room, half junk-shop, where tools and a bench were to be seen, and where nails, screws, wire, lead pipe, and iron pipe were abundant. This was Pierre's den, separated by a large curtain from the studio itself. Both Pierre and Jim being

absent, the coast was clear, and the little party of three passed behind the curtain.

Once within the sacred precincts, Jack Emery behaved with great propriety. He was not at all the traditional bull in a china shop. He broke nothing, jarred nothing, touched nothing. His awe and admiration gave Tom a thrill of pleasure; for deep in the bottom of Tom's boyish soul lay a passionate loyalty to his father, and all his father's works. He had often told his friends how clever and celebrated his father was, and here was a chance to prove the truth of his words. Yielding up Bonaparte into Jack's charge, he removed two or three of the rubber cases, to show how the figures were swathed in wet rags; he even lifted some of the wet rags, to show what the figures themselves were like. Monkey looked and listened with all his eyes and ears.

"That," said Tom, when his friend pointed to a large cast of a procession of riders, "oh, that's from the Parthenon."

"Did your father do it?" asked Jack, who had not yet gone into Greek history.

"No," said Tom carelessly; "but he could have. He's done bigger things than that!"

By the time Tom, in his character of guide, had reached the front part of the studio, his scruples about the presence of Monkey had quite vanished; he was beginning to feel that if his father could but see them now, and hear the conversation, he would entirely approve.

"What's that thing for?" asked Monkey, pointing toward a stout little truck resting on four heavy double castors. "I see there are lots of them."

"For moving things," answered Tom. "My father usually has one of them under each modelling stand, so that he can roll his work from place to place and get different lights on it. Things look different in different lights," concluded the youthful moralist.

"How nice that little white figure looks," cried Monkey,

catching sight of the study at the other end of the studio. "I mean the one with three horses and a waggon, with a boy standing up in it."

"That's called the Chariot Race," said Tom. "You know—the old Greek chariots. Father's going to have it made large size, and put on the top of the Live-stock Exchange. It'll be about the biggest thing in America, I suppose."

"Does your father make 'em up out of his own head?" Jack asked, respectfully.

"Well, yes; he makes them up out of his own head first, and then he has models afterward. He did those horses up-country. And haven't you ever seen that Italian boy hanging around? He posed for the rider."

"How do you mean—*posed*?" asked Monkey.

"I'll show you," said Tom, entering into his duties as host. "Just tie that rope around Bonaparte's collar, so, and he represents the horses. Then the Italian boy takes hold of the reins, so, and gets on to the model stand, so!"

Suiting the action to the word, Tom stood upon the truck, and reined in the struggling Bonaparte, as if driving at full speed.

Now if Monkey Emery had only known a certain little fact about that hard-wood floor—namely, that owing to the settling of the building it was slightly lower at the end where the heavy works usually stood, he would never, no, never, even in the fullness of his heart, have given that playful little kick at the rear of the truck. The castors had been cleaned and oiled that very morning; the floor was free from obstacles. The truck started, the dog made a furious jump, and in an instant, truck, dog, and boy had dashed up against the packing-case pedestal of the Last Chariot Race. Crash! crash! and after that the deluge! The group lay in fragments on the floor, and as the stone pitcher chanced to be standing by, that and its contents came tumbling after.

PART II.

HOWLING Bonaparte was the first to emerge from the wreck ; shaking the water from his coat and the dust of the studio from his feet, he limped away as fast as wrath and three legs could carry him. Next Tom came forth, sick at heart and sore in both elbows. Monkey, with an awful vision of his ultimate capture by his arch-enemy, the policeman, stood speechless in despair.

"It's my fault, I suppose," he murmured at last. "I didn't mean anything."

"Of course you didn't mean anything," said Tom, fiercely. "Father says the worst trouble-maker of all is the one that doesn't mean anything."

"Can it ever be mended?" ventured Jack.

"No," cried Tom, gazing hopelessly at the headless rider, the overturned chariot, the dock-tailed, knock-kneed horses, whose wire skeletons showed grimly through their scarred flanks. "Even if it could, do you suppose my father wants patched-up, broken things? You'd better get out of this, and leave me to face the music. I don't know what father will do. There's three months' work gone to smash." Something very like a sob struggled in Tom's throat, in spite of his feet and inches.

But Monkey's nature was hopeful ; besides, he could not comprehend nearly as well as Tom the extent of the damage. "Perhaps," suggested he, "liquid glue——"

"Liquid idiot!" howled Tom, forgetting the easy affability becoming to a host.

At that moment Jim and Pierre returned. The former was not greatly moved ; to him the disaster meant not so much a loss to art as a cause for "janiting"; in his character of Destroyer he felt a certain sympathy for the offenders. But the wrath of Pierre knew no bounds. He hurled at the boys sharp bits of badly broken English, calling Tom an "infant prodigal,"

and Jack Emery a "misérable criminel, lost to humane sentiments."

"The work of a whole winter lies here in morsels," lamented Pierre, in his native tongue. "All is lost. It is useless to gather up the fragments, since it is impossible to put them together again—impossible even for me, who knows so well how to do all things. For the three horses it matters not, since my master has copies of these; but for the little figure of the lad all is indeed over. Why, oh, why were boys ever made? Or if they must be made, why were they made like this?"

Meanwhile, the sculptor, whistling a little tune, was walking smartly up the street. His spirits had risen several degrees since morning; for, as it happened, he had seen the chairman of the committee, and that gentleman had begged that the visit might be postponed a month, as one member was ill, and he himself had just been summoned to San Francisco on business that might detain him there two weeks or more. "I *am* a lucky fellow," mused the sculptor, fitting his key into the front-door key-hole. "This postponement comes just in the nick of time. With one month's work I can remodel parts of that group, so that it will be far better in itself, and better worth showing to the committee. I know what the thing lacks. The horses and chariot are well enough, but the action of that chariot-driver doesn't suit me; it hasn't the style and snap it ought to have."

Alas, poor sculptor! Very little "style and snap" has your chariot-driver at this moment. Look at him where he lies in white fragments on the floor, his limbs shattered, his head under the chariot-wheel. No wonder you turn pale and utter a fierce exclamation.

The two boys, standing among the ruins, look up at the sculptor and shiver. Pierre's outburst had been bad enough; what will the real victim say?

For a moment the sculptor said not a word; he dared not speak. Then, in a voice that fell on Tom's ear like a lump of ice, he asked, very calmly, "And whose work might this be?"

Tom's pale lips moved in explanation ; but Monkey sprang forward.

"It's my work, sir. It's all my fault. I didn't mean anything ; but, of course," he added, mechanically, in Tom's words, "the worst trouble-maker of all is the one that *doesn't* mean anything."

The sculptor smiled grimly to hear his proverb quoted.

"I was to blame, too," said Tom, with an effort. "I harnessed Bonaparte, and stood upon the truck."

"And then I gave it a push," continued Jack, manfully, "and the truck started, and we couldn't stop it, and then everything tipped over."

"Precisely," observed the sculptor. "And, Thomas, may I inquire *why* you were standing on the truck ?"

Tom, cut by the strange hardness in his father's tone, replied, "I was showing Monkey Emery how Raphael posed for the rider."

"Indeed ! I beg that you will favour me with the same exhibition. I might get some valuable points, perhaps. Come, mount !"

Tom unwillingly obeyed. To prevent a lump from rising in his throat he held his head very erect. The sculptor, even in the midst of his anger and grief, felt a sudden thrill of pride in the lithe young figure, the resolute face. His heart softened, and he spoke in a kinder tone.

"You lads don't realise that those scraps of plaster there have cost me weeks and weeks of labour. You forget, too, that I have spent my whole life thus far learning how to make a little thing like this you've just smashed so easily. Look at that figure, broken to bits. It was not perfect, but I was hoping, with a few changes, to make it at least good. And now I must begin from the beginning again." A look of profound discouragement crept into the sculptor's eyes. Tom held his head higher, to keep a tear from showing. "Surely you, my son," the sculptor went on, very gently—"you have seen enough of my work to know that in a work-

shop like this carelessness is crime and fun is sin! You must know how many days I spent on that one figure, and how long and how patiently young Raphael, a boy not much older than yourself, has stood on that model-stand. Raphael took his little share in the responsibilities of life, but you, you don't know what the word responsibility means. I have a great mind to punish you," he added, whimsically, "by keeping you standing there on that truck until I get another sketch of the chariot-driver."

"Well," burst out Tom, "I will if you want me to. I'll do it now. I'm sorry for what I did, and I wish I could make it up to you somehow."

The sculptor shrugged his shoulders. "I'm afraid your posing wouldn't be worth much to me," he said briefly.

Tom flushed. "You don't give me a chance," he cried.

"Oh," returned his father, "if you really want a chance, here goes. Strip off your jacket, and jump on the model-stand. Put your feet on Raphael's chalk marks, take up the reins as Raphael does, and I'll see what I can make out of you as a model."

So saying, the sculptor pulled out a stand, on which was the wire frame-work for a figure about half the size of the fallen driver. He did not for a moment imagine that his restless, ne'er-do-well Tom could be of the slightest use to him as a model; but he thought it right to punish the boy by accepting the reparation offered. Sore at heart as he was, hardly trusting himself to look at the fragments Pierre was trying to piece together, he glanced idly at his new model, and pressed large lumps of clay upon the wire skeleton.

Great was his surprise to find that at the end of ten minutes his son was still standing upon Raphael's chalk marks, immovable, except for a slight trembling in his arms. Tom was on his mettle. He held up his chin, and squared his shoulders, and compressed his lips, with the dignity of an athlete going to martyrdom.

"If only I could get a hired model to look like that,"

thought his father, interested in spite of himself, "I could make something out of that chariot-driver."

Twelve more minutes passed.

"Rest," said the sculptor, rather reluctantly.

Tom relaxed his tense muscles. "How long have I stood still?" he asked, wondering to himself if it were much more than an hour. "Twenty-two minutes," answered his father.

Tom made no sign of surprise, but said, bravely enough, "I'll pose twenty-two minutes longer, and then one minute, and that will make forty-five minutes, just Raphael's time."

"Very well," replied the sculptor. "Pose!"

Let not those who never tried it think that posing is easy work. My broad-shouldered, athletic young friend of sixteen, I assure you that even to one of your famous muscle an old-fashioned morning at the wood-pile would be as nothing compared with one half-hour on the model-stand. To sit still in an easy-chair and read an interesting book, that's one thing; but to stand forty-five long minutes in the act of reining in a—saw-horse, ah! that's another matter. Every nerve in Tom's body shrieked with joy when at last his father called "time," and he descended from his pillory.

Then, to the great astonishment of the others, Monkey Emery emerged from a dark corner, and sprang to the stand.

The sculptor laughed aloud. "Do you suppose I can piece out Tom with you?" he asked.

Monkey reddened. "I know I'm not good-looking," said he, "and all the fellows make fun of my freckles; but anyway, I'm tough, and I'm straight, and I can drive a saw-horse as fast as anybody!"

"All right," assented the sculptor, entering into the spirit of things, "drive away!" He knew at a glance that Jack Emery was by nature even more restless than Tom; and as he had expected little from Tom, so he expected nothing from Tom's friend. However, it might be interesting to observe, by comparison and by contrast, the characteristic

motions of the two lads ; Monkey was quite as guilty as Tom, and had just as much need of repentance.

But Monkey, too, was on his mettle ; he had made up his mind not to be outdone by Tom. As he gathered up his reins, and planted his feet firmly on the stand, and swayed his slender body far back into space, it suddenly struck the sculptor that this, just this, was the "action" he had vainly struggled to put into his chariot-driver !

Eureka ! With rapid fingers the sculptor bent back the clay torso, building up here, cutting down there. During the forty-five minutes of Tom's pose the sketch had progressed wonderfully ; the unsightly wire skeleton had entirely disappeared under muscles of clay ; you plainly saw the sturdy figure of a chariot-driver. Now, however, the sturdy figure took on a new grace, that of spirited action. The sculptor was placing his little pellets of clay with the swift precision of a man who knows a fleeting opportunity when he sees it. "This sort of thing can't last," thought he.

Meanwhile Monkey Emery kept a stiff upper lip under his freckles, and tried hard to imagine that the saw-horse was a veritable thunderer, snorting and plunging and striking fire from his hoofs. He had leisure to think of a number of things, but none of them seemed amusing. He tried, for example, to fancy himself squirting the syringe upon that stray cat, but somehow the idea lacked its previous charm ; he even began to doubt if there would be any fun in using the dusty nose of that big bust as a target.

"You've posed fifteen minutes," said the sculptor. "Don't you want to get down?"

"No," said Jack, indulging in a prodigious stretch, "not till the three-quarters are up !" Then he gripped his lines tighter, thinking to himself, "Only fifteen minutes ! I've heard about 'the bad quarter of an hour' ; this must be it !"

Another bad quarter of an hour dragged by on leaden feet. Again Monkey refused to descend, contenting himself as before with a good stretch. "I can bear it if Tom could," thought he, "and I'm on the last lap now." But that last lap seemed

longest of all ; and he was just beginning to wonder if people ever did really burst and fly into fragments, when at last the blessed signal came to jump down. And didn't Monkey jump !

The sculptor stepped back a few paces and looked at his new sketch. His face was lighted by one of his rare smiles, and Tom, eagerly watching for some such sign, knew at once that not all was lost, and that he and Monkey had partly atoned.

The sculptor, though an artist, was a just man. "Boys," said he, still with the same bright smile, "perhaps you have saved me—at any rate, you have saved yourselves. So escape, escape now, while I am still in the mood to show mercy !"

A reflection of his father's smile shone on Tom's face, and Monkey's grin widened to its uttermost limits, as these two betook themselves in search of Bonaparte and the educated turtle. Pierre, kneeling among the ruins and patiently fastening a finger to a hand, and a hand to a wrist, winked indulgently as they passed. As a matter of fact, Pierre was in his element ; to mend the broken was his delight ; and he had before him a "splendid case," as the doctors would say. But since this is not a fairy tale, I cannot in honesty add that he repaired all damages so skillfully that the study looked even better than before. On the contrary, he fitted and patched and plastered, far into the night and half of the next day, without accomplishing any such miracle. Nor can I pretend that the new sketch of the chariot-driver was so marvellous in its beauty of pose and splendour of execution that the sculptor straightway went forth rejoicing, and sought the remnant of the committee, who rejoiced also, and in that same hour caused the work to be executed in bronze, of great size, and hoisted to the top of the Live-stock Exchange, amid the plaudits of the people and music by the band. Art is not like that. A sketch is only the positive degree ; a study, the comparative ; a finished work, the superlative. A sketch may cost hours ; a study days ; a finished work, years. My only point was that though

the sculptor had lost much by the boys' mischief he yet gained something through their reparation ; and, furthermore, that the thing gained chanced to be the thing most needed. That's all. But I fancy it will be a long time before Monkey Emery's freckles will be seen again in a studio light.

SIX AND HALF A DOZEN.

BY HATTIE LOUISE JEROME.

“W E’LL teach him a thing or two,” nodded Ben.
“Cousin Archie? Well, yes,” chuckled Ned.
“I guess when he goes home, he’ll think a city chap can learn a little something on a farm.”

“Hm-m!” sniffed the hired man. “Ye needn’t s’pose you’re a-goin’ ter dew all the teachin’. They larn some mighty cur’us things down ter them city skewls nowadays.”

But the boys were not convinced. They only looked at each other and winked as they went on with their work. Ben was turning the grindstone for the hired man to sharpen his scythe. Ned was slowly pouring on the water in a tiny stream from the tin dipper.

Across the yard little Annie was swinging on the stout gate at the end of the gravel walk. Every time the gate swung out beyond the hedge which separated the farm from the grass-bordered village road the little girl took a long look down the road; and when, at the other end of the exhilarating little journey, it shut together with a sharp bang that would have jerked a less-experienced rider from her position, the child glanced up to the window where mamma sat sewing, and then to the door of the shed near which her brothers were at work, and shook her small head in a way that clearly said, “Not yet.”

Cousin Archie was coming from the city to spend a few weeks on the farm. Papa had gone to the station to meet him; mamma had cooked great pans of dough-nuts, and baked several extra pies and a chocolate layer-cake; and the two boys

Ben and Ned were prepared to slip behind the barn out of sight at a moment's notice.

At last came a glad cry from the gate: "Here they come! here they come!" A flying figure disappeared up the road, to return seated in triumph on her father's knee, driving with her small browned hands the noble span of great farm-horses.

"Archie has never seen a cow milked," his mother had written, "or watched the hen with her chickens, or seen the pigs fed, or heard the croaking of the frogs, or picked berries. I'm sure he will be very happy with you, for he is always eager to learn, and his cousins can teach him so much that will be new and interesting."

"Such a little greenie!" Ben had said, with much importance. "Probably he won't know a hen from a turkey, and will think the pigs ought to take a morning bath every day before breakfast!" Ben was thirteen years old, and so was, of course, very wise—at least so thought Ned, who was only eleven, and Annie who was but nine—just Archie's age.

"Want to go after the cows with us," invited Ben, soon after Archie's arrival that afternoon.

"Yes, indeed," assented Archie. "Where are they?"

"They're attending a social down by the bars," said Ben. "We can't send the carriage for them to-night, so we'll have to go down and see them home."

"How funny he talks," thought Archie. "He must be a very droll boy. I'm sure I shall like him," but he said nothing.

"Took it all in, didn't he?" chuckled Ned. "He'll learn some things before he's a day older!"

Cows look so large when they are coming straight toward you! Archie was not in the least used to such familiarity; and although his cousins would have been more terror-stricken in crossing Broadway, they were greatly amused to see him dodge and make for a stone wall when a peaceful old cow came lounging toward him.

"Wave your arms at 'em," instructed little Annie. "You can shoo 'em 'most as easy as hens!"

"Now," asked Ben, "which shall I show you first—the one from which we milk molasses, or the one which gives kerosene?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Archie cordially. "What a droll boy you are! But, Cousin Ben, I wish you'd just hold one of their mouths open a moment, so I could look down and see the gullet where the cud goes first."

"What do you mean, Cousin Archie?" Annie asked.

"Why, you know the cow carries a sort of lunch-basket around with her," explained Archie merrily. "When she finds a nice clump of grass she bites it off and rolls it up with her tongue into a ball, and packs it away in a kind of a pouch. Then when she's where she can't feed, she brings it up, and chews and chews on it, and that time it goes down into her stomach and is digested. I wonder"—he broke off, turning to the boys—"if a cow ever chews the same cud over twice? Does she?"

"I'm sure I don't know," confessed Ben.

Cows had always been so familiar to them, neither Ben nor Ned had ever thought of studying them in this way.

"This cow is chewing her cud," announced Ben, rather ashamed not to do what his cousin asked, yet not daring to attempt it.

Down on his knees Archie watched eagerly.

"Why," he said, in surprise, "she seems to bring it up from somewhere down near her stomach. I thought perhaps she had a pouch in her cheeks, same as the little harvest mouse and some kind of monkeys do."

Ben was making a great show of letting one of the cows lap salt from his hand.

"How brave you are!" cried his small cousin. "Do you suppose I'll ever dare do it?"

"It's easy enough," answered Ned, giving another cow a handful of meal. "They like salt and meal."

"Yes, I know they like salt. No animal could live without it. But don't you think the cow is the most interesting animal you know?"

"Oh no," answered Ben quickly. "I like elephants and tigers and lions! Did you ever see any of them?"

"Oh yes," answered Archie simply; "we learn about all the animals in school and in our Natural History Club. Why, even when I was a baby in the kindergarten we learned all the uses of the cow—aren't there lots of them? And yet I'd never seen a cow milked, or been very near one. Isn't it strange?"

"The cows and oxen aren't so useful now as they used to be," instructed Ben wisely. "You don't see many oxen used around here. Of course they still get milk and all kinds of beef from them, and leather, but that's about all."

"And glue," added Archie, "and hair for plaster; and they use the bones and horns for ever so many things."

"*Glue*—from a cow!" exclaimed Ben incredulously.

"Yes, indeed!" answered Archie; "from the hoofs and ears and odd bits of hide—and glue is used for so many things. Did you know it was used to glaze paper and straw hats? I didn't, till I went into a straw shop and a paper-mill."

"No," admitted the two brothers, becoming interested.

"And cow's hair," he added, "is the very best thing to mix with plaster to make it firm and strong, you know. Buttons are made from the horns and bones, and knife-handles and combs and brushes."

"Dear me!" cried Annie, with shining eyes, "so many things," counting them up on her fingers, "beef and milk—and they use milk for ever so many things—butter and cheese and *ice-cream*!" smacking her lips. "Do you like cream on berries, Archie?" she asked suddenly.

"Yes, indeed!" replied Archie. "I suppose your cream is so much better than that we have, I shall hardly know what it is. We use condensed milk to make ice-cream; but new cream must be much nicer."

"There, just notice that hen," cried Ben, determined not to relinquish his scheme without one more attempt. "That

hen, roosting on the apple-tree, hasn't got a tooth in her head !”

“She must keep them in her stomach,” laughed Archie ; then, thinking that if this was the style of joking his cousins enjoyed he would join in it, he added, “And not a single one of your cows has any front teeth on the upper jaw.”

“Oh yes, they have,” said Ned quickly. “Our cows are all right.”

And Ben asked, “What makes you think so ?”

“Why, don't you know ?” asked the young natural-history enthusiast, eyeing them in surprise. “A cow never has any front teeth on her upper jaw.”

“Is that so ?” said Ben carelessly, trying to conceal his ignorance and chagrin. “Perhaps we'd better go in to supper now, Cousin Archie.” Then he added heartily : “I'm awful glad you're going to spend a few weeks with us. You've had a chance to learn so much we never thought of. We shall have jolly times together.”

“I knew we would !” exclaimed Archie cordially, “because you could teach me so many things I don't know. Now, I can hardly tell a pear-tree from an apple or cherry-tree.”

“Is that so ?” asked Ben, however, with much respect even for his cousin's ignorance. “Well, perhaps we can teach you some things.”

“Waal ! waal !” chuckled the hired man, as he strained the white foaming froth from the milk. “Fer a nine-year-old, thet ther leetle city chap does beat all possessed ! I'm right glad his pesky young cousins hes diskivered thet the teachin' ain't a-goin' ter be all on their side. It'll do 'em a sight o' good.”

THE CHRONOTHERMAL SPRING.

BY FRANCIS LYNDE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CREVICE CAVE.

IT was yet early in the evening. For dwellers within wide horizons there were still two hours of sun, but his last rays had already overshot the little village of Cove Spring, nestling in a valley in the eastern shoulder of Sand Mountain, whose broad shadows were rising like a transparent sea of hazy blue up the opposite slopes of Lookout Mountain, steadily submerging forest, field, and meadow. The forge fire in Hiram Upton's blacksmith shop glowed cheerily in the half-light.

"Blow up a leetle mite more now, Dickie," he said to the boy at the bellows lever, "an' you, Carey, jest get 'round here so 't ye can get a good holt o' them tongs. When I say ready, jest yerck it out an' hit it 'crost th' horn o' the anvil t' knock off the slag, an' then hold it bevel side up jest about here," indicating a point on the anvil face with his hammer.

It wasn't often that the careful artisan trusted any boy but his own to help him in making a weld, and Carey Masterson's eyes brightened as he grasped the tongs and stood waiting for the word. Cautiously the smith made an aperture in the coals and peered intently into the depths of the fire. "Now, then, *ready!*" he shouted.

The clack of the bellows ceased, two white-hot pieces of iron flashed in the air through blinding arcs of light, exploding

into showers of sparks as they were struck over the horn of the anvil; then came the instant of silence as they were fitted together, followed by the blows of Dick's sledge, alternating with the lighter directing taps of his father's hand-hammer, and the weld was made.

Dick went back to the bellows when his father thrust the iron again into the fire, and Carey threw the hot tongs into the water bucket and followed him. "D' ye reckon your dad'd let you-all off to-morrow afte' dinner?" he asked.

"I guess so. You ask him."

"Mr. Upton, reckon Dick can go up the mountain 'ith me to-morrow?"

"I guess so," said the smith, wiping his hands on his leather apron. "Dick's been a-stickin' pretty clost t' the shop, an' a holiday won't hurt him. I'd like t' get out myself, 'f I c'd get a good breath of Vermont air." Upton was a migrant, and all things Southern suffered by comparison with New England standards.

"You'll come by for me?" said Carey, as Dick went to the door with him.

"Sure."

"Where'bouts d' you want to go?"

"Oh, we'll go up yonder to the big spring an' projeck 'round under the cliff. They's lots o' places to go."

Up the path leading to this spring the two boys trudged on the following day, beginning their ramble, and when they reached the spring they sat down on the short grass at its brink and watched the water gushing up among the loose rocks at the bottom.

"Father can say what he likes about Vermont," said the elder; "but we don't have any finer springs 'n that up our way."

"I'm glad o' that; seem like he thinks 'at we got a no-'count sort o' country down yere," replied Carey.

"Oh, he don't more 'n half mean all 't he says. Don't believe you c'd drive him back to Vermont. Then it's only nach'ral," continued this young philosopher. "Ye see, he

was born an' raised up there, an' a feller kind o' forgets 'bout the uncomf'table things when he's moved away from a place."

"I reckon we all think a heap o' the place where we's borned," replied Carey. "Seems like no place is jes' the same to me 's this yere cove. Our ol' house set right over yonder on that there level place, an' we lived yere tell hit burned down three years ago."

"I never knowed that," said Dick. "I s'pose that's how your father come to own the spring;" and he bent down over the glassy surface, and took a long drink of the cool water.

"Say!" he exclaimed, as he straightened up; "did you ever notice what a cold wind there is right down clost to the water?"

"That's 'cause hit's a blowin' spring," replied Carey. "They's plenty of 'em all along the mountain. Jes' hol' your hand down close an' you can feel it."

"That's so; fe'les if a wind was blowin' right out o' the cliff. What makes it?"

"Nobody cain't tell."

Dick Upton was thoughtful for a few moments. Here was something puzzling. He got up and walked all around the spring, carefully scrutinising its borders and the grey sandstone cliff which sprang abruptly from the back of the little cove to the top of the plateau.

"Ain't there a cave somewheres 'round here?" he asked, coming back to where Carey was standing.

"Not very close. They's one 'round on the far side o' that big rock yonder."

"Let's go an' have a look at it. I'm kind o' cur'us to know what makes that cold wind."

"All right," assented Carey, leading the way along the base of the cliff. "I don't reckon hit has anything to do 'ith the spring. Hit's too far away."

"Have ye ever been in it?" asked Dick.

"Not very far. Hit's choked up 'ith broken rocks after ye get in a little piece."

Presently they reached the mouth of the cavern, a low-browed opening in a cleft of the rock. The obstruction mentioned by Carey was in plain view from the entrance, and Dick went in and examined it. Then he began to remove some of the smaller stones, and in a few minutes he had a hole large enough to admit his shoulders.

"Hurrah!" he shouted, backing out of the narrow passage. "The cave goes right on into the hill, an' it's as big as a house! Let's get a light an' explore it."

A few branches twisted from a fallen pine near by furnished the material for a torch. Dick wriggled through the opening he had made, and Carey followed, after handing in the fuel. Then the torch was lighted, and the boys looked around them.

"Hit's a crevice," said Carey, staring up into the profound darkness overhead, and trying to make out the height of the passage

"What's that?" asked the inquisitive boy.

"Why, I cain't tell jes' how hit comes; Mr. Alcorn says that pieces o' the cliff get split off a little ways, and then the crack gets covered over at the top."

"I'll just bet a penny that this 'n' comes out 'round by the spring, an' that's where the cold wind comes from," said Dick. "Let's foller it up an' see."

The passage led diagonally into the mountain, bearing a little toward the spring, and preserving its width of four or five feet pretty uniformly. In only two places the walls approached each other so that the boys had to squeeze through sidewise, and on passing the last of these they came into a wider chamber, in which the light of the torch paled visibly. A glance into the depths above gave the reason—the top of the crevice was open, and the daylight streamed in, making a dim twilight in the cavern. A swarm of bats, disturbed by the light and smoke of the torch, flew tumultuously out through the opening, sending a shower of sand and pebbles rattling down upon the explorers. It was a little gruesome for the boys at first, but Carey was a born moun-

taineer, and Dick was hard-headed and practical. "Wa'n't raised in the woods to be skeered by an owl," he would say. Curiously they looked around in the dusky shadows of the chamber, following the dim outlines of its boundaries. Suddenly Dick, who was carrying the torch, grasped Carey's arm, and peered into the deeper gloom of a recess on the farther side of the cave. "What's that?" he exclaimed, pointing with the torch toward something that looked like the coils of a mighty serpent.

Carey did not answer, but both boys stood their ground bravely, and stared hard at the strange-looking object. Then Dick stooped and tossed a pebble into the dark corner; the familiar ring of metal came back, and with it the mysterious object resolved itself into a coil of copper pipe, ending in a huge kettlelike bulb.

"Great Je-*ru*-sha, but I thought it was a snake!" exclaimed Dick, drawing a long breath of relief.

"I sort o' reckoned so too; an' I'd a-run if you hadn't gripped me," replied Carey.

They went over and examined the thing. "Looks like a b'iler," said Dick. "It is a b'iler o' some kind; here's where the fire's been. What d'you s'pose it's for?"

"Why, hit's a still—a thing 'at they make whiskey in," replied Carey, mildly. "I reckon hit's ol' Bill Hicks's still 'at I've hearn dad tell about. Bill, he usen to make moonshine whiskey up yere some place, an' nobody ever did fin' out where."

"Who wanted to find out?"

"The revenuers. I can ric'lect when I was a little lad, they-all usen to come 'round an' try to get dad to tell 'em; he always said he didn' know."

"But how d'you s'pose they got that thing in here?" queried Dick. "It's too big to go through them places where we squeezed through, an' it wouldn't come through that crack up yonder," indicating the opening above.

"I can't tell, lessen they's another opening to the cave," replied Carey.

"That's it!" exclaimed Dick, jumping up: "an' when we find it, you just see if it don't come out by the spring."

"Listen!" said Carey, kneeling and putting his ear to the ground. "I can hear the water a-tricklin'."

"So can I," said Dick, gathering up the torch and blowing it into a flame.

Carey peered out through a convenient cranny, and said: "You was all right about hit. The spring's right yere."

"Oh, I knew it. Couldn't be no other way. That cold wind's bound to have some place 'r other to come from. Now let's go back a piece, and see if we can't find out where the water runs through."

A little search revealed a basin near the old still where the water ran in from the side next the wall and out again through a hole in the bottom.

"This yere's the real spring," said Carey. "That 'n' out yonder ain't nothin' but a catch-basin, don't ye reckon?"

"We can prove it easy enough," was the answer. "Just you go an' watch that pool outside, an' I'll put a piece o' bark down through this hole."

The test proved Dick's theory.

"Hit jes' popped up in a minute," Carey said, as he rejoined Dick in the chamber.

Then the boys sat down again, and speculated over their find; and the question of ownership, started by Dick, being settled by Carey's affirming that it "undoubtedly b'longed to ol' Bill Hicks, an' he's been dead more'n eight year," the other lad began to figure on the possibility of turning it to some practical account.

"It's got a lot o' good copper in it, but it seems a pity to cut it up for scraps," he said.

"We couldn't cut it up, nohow."

"Huh! Couldn't, eh? Just give me a good cold-chisel an' a hammer, an' I'll scrap it in less 'n no time," said Dick. "But, 's I say, it seems too bad to smash it up for old copper."

They discussed the question for some time, but could

come to no conclusion further than to keep the discovery to themselves for the present ; and to make this sure, they removed some of the stones from the old opening behind the spring which came out under a thick mat of bushes, and climbing out through this aperture, they carefully closed the one through which they had entered. Then they went down to the village and separated, agreeing to meet again the next day.

That evening, after supper, when Pent Masterson was sitting in the chimney-corner, smoking, Carey approached him cautiously on the subject of old Bill Hicks.

"I reckon I *do* ric'lect him. Th' ol' coon had er still 'round yere some place, an' th' revenueurs jes' nev' could ketch up 'ith hit. I don't believe 'at three men on ther mounting knowed whar it war, 'sides ol' Bill hisself."

"D' you reckon hit was close by?" asked Carey.

"Hit must a-ben. Ol' Bill 'd jes' light out up ther mounting, an' be back 'ith a jug a-fore ye could walk two sights."

This conversation settled two points in Carey's mind : Bill Hicks had evidently owned the still in the cave, and his father had not been in the secret, though just how he could have escaped the knowledge, with the opening so close to the old Masterson homestead, was a little puzzling. From thinking and talking of the old still, Carey's thoughts glided easily and naturally to Dick Upton.

The opening of the coal mines at Spring Cove had brought in many strangers, and among the new-comers were plenty of boys and girls of Carey's age, who put the mountain lad to shame on the score of education. Enthusiasm Carey Masterton had never known—it tinctures sparingly the mountain blood—but he soon reasoned out, in a way, where the difference lay between himself and, say, Dick Upton, who, though careless of speech and seemingly as uncultivated as the native boys, could, nevertheless, read and write and cipher, and through these avenues could go on to indefinite heights of knowledge. In his slow, patient way Carey had come at

length to the conclusion that he must, in some way, learn to read and write.

Pent Masterson had puffed away in silence for some minutes, when Carey spoke again. "Does you reckon I could go to school this yere winter?" he asked.

"I'm 'feard ye cain't, Buddy. I'm 'bleeged ter have ye in th' mine 'ith me, an' you're gittin' ter be right smart now," said the man.

"I wisht you could fix hit somehow. I want to go pow'ful bad."

"I know ye does, honey, an' I'd admire fer ye ter go jes' kase ye want ter ; but I jes' nachelly don' see how ye kin go. We's jes' too pore."

Carey sat staring into the fire for a little while, and then went up to his bed in the loft of the tumble-down shack which he called home, feeling sore at heart and troubled because of this last failure to move his father.

The bench-work held out for some days in Hiram Upton's shop, and meanwhile the boys made several excursions to the crevice cave. On one of these, when they were sitting in the cool twilight of the old still-room Carey spoke of his trouble.

"I'd learn anyway," was Dick's comment.

"I reckon you would, but I'm someways pow'ful slow ; I don't know which way to begin."

"Just get a spellin'-book, an' go at it head-fo'most. You've got plenty o' grit, an' that's all anybody wants."

"I—I tried that way," replied Carey, hanging his head as if it were a shame to confess defeat. "I jes' couldn't make nothin' out o' hit. I reckin hit would be a heap easier at school. Wouldn't hit?"

"Why don't you get your father 'r your mother to start you in it?" suggested Dick.

"They can't," said Carey, dropping his head still lower.

And Dick grew red and embarrassed between his consternation at the discovery and a regretful shame for his lack of consideration. "I wish we'd found a coal vein 'stead of

this old copper," he said; "then your father c'd a-sold it an' had plenty o' money." Then thinking it was high time for some kind of diversion, he began piling up the wood they had brought in for torches in the fireplace of the old still.

Carey did not look around until he heard the splutter of the match as Dick lighted the pile. "Is you gwine to make whiskey?" he asked.

"I guess not; but I'm goin' to see if this old kettle 'll boil water."

In a short time the fire was burning briskly, and its heat and light made the cavern seem cheerful and cosy. Before long a thin stream of vapour began to pour out of the end of the worm, and the boys watched it curl away into the smoky depths above. Dick sat with his knees drawn up to his chin, staring steadily at the column of vapour, and apparently thinking with all his might. Suddenly he sprang to his feet and executed an impromptu war-dance around Carey and the fire. "I've got it! I've got it!" he shouted. "The biggest thing you ever heard of. Oh, won't it be fun!" And he rolled on the cavern floor, hugging himself in an ecstasy of joy.

CHAPTER II.

THE BOILING FOUNTAIN.

"WHAT is hit?" asked Carey, gazing in mild wonder at the antics of his companion.

"Oh, just the best thing you ever did see!" said Dick. "That spring outside has always been chock-full o' cold water, hasn't it?"

"Why, I reckon so. Couldn't be nare 'n other way, could hit?"

"But it shall, my son, it shall. We're goin' to have a boilin' spring that'll set the whole country to talkin'. That's what we're goin' to have."

"Jes' tell me how you are gwine do that," said Carey, whose perfect confidence in Dick's mechanical ability was quite unshaken by the seemingly impossible proposition.

"It's just as easy as rollin' off a log," was the reply.

It was supper-time when the boys finally crawled out of the cave and ran down the mountain to the village, and it was late that night before either of them went to sleep.

It might have been a week after this that old Billy Johnson went up to the big spring for a bucket of water, which he had always declared to be a sure alleviation for the "misery" in his back. A little later he hobbled into the village store, empty bucket in hand, his eyes rolling in a comical expression of dismay, not unmixed with terror.

"What's the matter, Uncle Billy?" asked one of the loungers.

"Hit's de big spring, dat's what's de mattah; hit's gone tu'ned hitself inter a wash-b'iler, an' hit's des a-spittin' an' a-growlin' an' a-bilin'."

A shout of laughter greeted Uncle Billy's explanation, and some one ventured the opinion that the old negro had seen a "harnt."

"'Tain't nuffin ob de kin', Mars Scruggs; de harnts don' fool roun' atter sunup in de mo'nin'. I's des a-tellin' de plain troof; dat ol' spring's des a-bilin' an' a-hollerin' like de rocks in de bottom was red-hot. Yes, sah; des go up dar an' see fo' you' own se'f;" and Uncle Billy sat down upon a cracker box and carefully extracted a rabbit's foot from his pocket, just to make sure, apparently, that he had it.

A committee of three, of which Pent Masterson was chairman, incredulous as to the truth of Uncle Billy's story, and mildly curious as to its motive, volunteered to accompany him back to the cove. When they reached the spring, the erstwhile placid pool was indeed bubbling and spluttering in a most astonishing manner. One of the committee, thrusting his hand into the water, withdrew it with a jerk and a yell.

Pent Masterson gazed long and earnestly into the hissing pool before he spoke. "Hit jes' beats me cl'ar out, boys; I've

knowned that thar spring, man an' boy, sence I was knee-high ter a toad frog, an' I 'low hit's allers be'n col' water 's long 's I kin ric'lect."

"Well, hit's hot ernough t' scal' a shoat in now," said the burned one. Some little investigation was attempted, such as feeling the ground in the vicinity, cooling a little of the water and tasting it, and one even went so far as to test the temperature of the cliff back of the spring, as if it might prove to be the chimney to this remarkable subterranean furnace.

Such news travels fast and far. Inside of an hour little knots of people had gathered at the usual focussing-points to discuss the new marvel.

Hiram Upton's blacksmith shop was one of these. The smith stood with folded arms, leaning against his anvil, a half-incredulous smile playing over his shrewd features as the little group of loiterers, stirred for once out of the reticence which is the mountaineer's birthright, talked excitedly about the strange phenomenon.

"Then it's a sure fact?" asked a miner who had just come up the valley, and who had not seen for himself.

"It is that," replied a gaunt mountaineer. "Jeff Scruggs, he jes' shoved his hand in, an' hit scalt him pow'ful bad."

"Reckon I'll go 'long up that-a-way afte' dinner," said the miner. "I'd walk a mile any time to see a col' spring what tuck to b'ilin' in one night."

"I'll go 'long with you, neighbour," said Upton. "I'd just like to see for myself; not as I misdoubts you, Mr. Crowby, only it's cur'us, ain't it, now?"

Dick and Carey were in the shop, listening to the talk. At this appointment for an afternoon visit to the spring Dick beckoned to Carey and vanished out of the back door.

"What do you think about it?" he asked.

"'Bout what?"

"'Bout father and Bill Tatum goin' up the cove after dinner. Shall it be hot 'r cold for 'em?"

"Reckon hit'll get cold by that time?"

"Course it will."

"I'm 'feared they might be trouble, 'cause they 's a lot o' folks yere 'at hain't seen hit when hit's b'ilin', an' they wouldn't nev' believe hit had b'iled."

"That's a fact," responded Dick, "an' we don't want anybody fightin' about it."

And so the afternoon visitors to the spring were able to verify the accounts of their predecessors. It was hot, undeniably so. Moreover, as if in honour of the attention it was attracting, the afternoon display was even more remarkable than that of the morning. It roared and gurgled joyously, sending up clouds of steam like a small geyser, and Dr. Barrie, who brought a thermometer, found the water quite up to the boiling-point.

"What do you think of it, doctor?" asked Mr. Alcorn.

"It's very curious and quite beyond me. There are no apparent reasons for volcanic action anywhere in this region, and, on the other hand, there seems to be no other way of accounting for the heat."

"Might it not be attributed to chemical action in this instance?" asked the other. "I have seen the thing on a small scale in a mine where a lime 'horse' was encountered."

"That would be a more probable explanation if this were a limestone region. As it is, you know there is nothing but sandstone and conglomerate around here."

"That's so. It's the same formation as that at the mine, and there is no limestone there."

"I have been asking questions of some of the older inhabitants," continued the doctor. "They all affirm that the spring has always been famous not only for its coldness, but for certain curative properties of the water. Old Mrs. Bledso says that in her youth the mountaineers used to come long distances to obtain it."

Mr. Alcorn was silent for a moment ; then he said, "Doctor, can this be a trick?"

"That was my first thought," replied the physician ; "but," with a sweep of his arm around the cove, "your eyes are better than mine. Do you see any chance for such a thing?"

"I must confess that I don't, and yet these cliffs are full of crevices and caves."

"That's very true; so they are; but a cave won't account for the phenomenon unless you throw in a steam-boiler or two, and some other very improbable conditions."

"You are right. I guess we'll have to fall back upon the volcanic theory, the which I am naturally anxious to disprove. The mine is only a mile above this, and we'll be having manifestations there before long if the crust here is thin enough to boil water."

"I wonder if the water really has any medicinal properties?" said the doctor, reflectively.

"Possibly it has. Have you the means for making an analysis?"

"Not properly; the necessary chemicals couldn't be obtained short of some of the large cities."

"What a magnificent site this plateau would be for a hotel sanatorium—a good climate, a magnificent view, fine trees, the cliff for a background; and if the water should really prove to be beneficial—Doctor, I believe I'll have it analysed. I know a few men in the East who would furnish the capital for an enterprise of this kind. Some of our own stockholders in the mining company would go into it."

As a result of this conversation a bottle of water from the spring, carefully sealed and packed in a box of sawdust, started that same evening on a long journey to a noted chemist in Boston. Mr. Alcorn, part owner and resident manager of the Cove Springs mine, never did things by halves; a proof of this was an immediate inquiry as to the ownership of the cove, followed by a ride to the county seat at Scottsboro the next day to examine the title to the property. As he rode through the village Hiram Upton called to him from the door of his shop.

"Heard about the spring?" he asked, as the manager checked his horse.

"No. What about it?"

"Oh, nothin', only it's cold 's ice-water ag'in. Stopped boilin' just 's sudden 's it began."

The total unreliability of this remarkable fountain became in the course of the next two weeks as much of a wonder as its first metamorphosis from a cold to a boiling spring. For two or three days at a time its water would bubble up clear and limpid, with a temperature that made one think of buried glaciers and hidden ice moraines as its source; then would come an interval of a few hours, when it would be hot enough to boil vegetables. It had no regular periods, and after much patient investigation, Dr. Barrie and Mr. Alcorn could settle but three definite conditions which never varied: it was always cold at night, it grew hot very gradually and cooled very quickly, and, strangest of all, the flow of waste water, which filled a considerable rivulet when the spring was cold, diminished to a mere thread when the water was hot. All of which data was carefully entered, compared, and verified in the doctor's note-book, without in the least contributing to an answer of the main question of why a spring which has always been a pattern of steadiness and decorum should suddenly take on habits so unaccountable and erratic.

At last there came a period of several days, during which the water was clear and cold. Dick Upton was helping his father pretty continuously during these days, and Carey spent much of his time around the blacksmith's shop. As a matter of strict truth, neither of the boys was quite satisfied with the outcome of their huge joke, partly because they had long since extracted all the fun there was in it, and partly for the reason that the necessity of keeping the secret of the cave made it impossible to share the fun with any one else.

Moreover, they were beginning to see the serious side of the affair. Ignorant people were frightened, and the negroes were beginning to shun the cove, and to talk about "harnts" and hobgoblins; even sensible people were perplexed, and now the shadow of a still more serious outcome was impending. Dick told Carey about it while the blacksmith was shoeing a horse in front of the shop.

"I heard this morning that Mr. Alcorn was tryin' to buy the cove from your father," he said.

"What does he want 'ith hit?" asked Carey.

"I dunno ; but somebody said it was to build a big hotel up there."

Further private talk was stopped by the entrance of Hiram Upton with a customer, and Carey went home with a queer medley of thoughts jostling in his mind. If his father could sell the cove, there would be money to spare, and out of this thought there sprang up, like Aladdin's night-growing palaces, visions of what he could do and become with the education which the money would perhaps put within his reach. And as against this, could he allow Mr. Alcorn to be swindled by the sham hot spring? Could he ever hold up his head again if he permitted the sale to go on? Would it be honest?

This poor unlettered mountain lad knew nothing of the specious arguments with which an unprincipled man of business would gloze over the points which so distressed him. To Carey it was a clear-cut question of right or wrong, honesty or dishonesty.

In the mean time the sawdust-packed bottle had safely made the journey to Boston, and its contents had formed the basis of a series of experiments in the chemist's laboratory. In due season Mr. Alcorn received something like this, as a result :

DEAR SIR,—The following is an analysis of the water referred to in your letter of the 15th ultimo.

One pint contains :							grains.
Ferrous Carbonate	...	...	...	...	...	...	0'300
Calcium Carbonate	...	...	...	...	...	...	1'657
Sodium Chloride	...	...	...	...	...	...	0'245
Sodium Sulphate	...	...	...	...	...	...	0'564
Magnesium Sulphate	...	...	...	...	...	...	1'500
Calcium Sulphate	...	...	...	...	...	...	9'276
Alumnia	...	...	...	...	...	...	9'962
Total							23'504

There is also a trace of free carbonate of copper, for the presence of which in a chalybeate water it is difficult to account, unless there be some extraneous cause, such as the presence of copper pipes leading into or out of the spring. The proportion of copper is,

however, so slight as not to affect the valuable medicinal properties of the water in the least. You will note on attached sheets comparisons of the above analysis with those made of the waters of noted mineral springs in Europe and America; these exhibits will sufficiently demonstrate the importance of your discovery.

Yours truly,

J. H. CAMERON, Analytical Chemist.

This information brought the question of the purchase down to the possibility of driving a bargain with Pent Masterson, and with this end in view the manager called at the cottage of the mountaineer in the evening of the day when Carey had learned from Dick that the purchase was a probability.

Carey was present at the interview, a silent figure, but every trivial circumstance of the conference photographed itself upon his memory. The lank, sinewy form of his father, clad in rough homespun, sitting in the old split-bottomed chair, the lines of reticence and secretiveness deeply graven in the thin face, the smoke curling up from the blackened cob pipe in his hand. And on the other side of the fire the manager, a curt, decisive man of business, inured, as even Carey could see, to making his bargains on his own terms, and yet tinged with a kindliness that made him defer to the simpler man where the question involved the sale of the only foothold of the family. He was trying to get Masterson to set a price upon the land.

"Oh, I 'low hit ain't wuth much; they's on'y a little patch 'at b'longs ter me."

"I know," interrupted the manager. "I presume I'm more familiar with the exact boundaries than you are. I had my engineer run the lines the other day."

"'Pears like you are mighty anxious ter buy that thar patch, Cap'n Alcorn." The little grey eyes of the mountaineer peered sharply at the man of business.

"I am, Masterson; and to show you that I am quite as anxious to be fair with you, I'll tell you what I think you do not know. You have a valuable spring on the land."

"Hit *ain't*, hit *ain't*," Carey kept repeating to himself,

while his father answered : " Yes, hit's a mighty fine spring, leastwise hit war 'for' hit tuck ter b'ilin'. They warn't no likelier on this yere mounting."

" I agree with you, and I want to buy it. What will you take for the land?"

" I dunno, Cap'n. 'Tain't the vally o' the land, n'r yit the spring. Hit air jes' the on'y patch 'at I ever did own, an' I 'low I sorter hate ter quit hit. What 'd hit be wuth ter you?"

The manager hesitated. The knowledge of the real worth of the spring was his, and he was bound by no law of trade to give the seller the advantage of the information contained in the analysis. And yet Robert Alcorn was a man of high principles, one who squared his actions by a higher law than that of buying and selling. " I'll give you eight thousand dollars for the land," he said quietly, resolutely setting his face against the temptation to consider the matter from a business point of view.

The room spun in dizzy circles around Carey when he heard the price named. With returning presence of mind came some realisation of all that this money would do for his father and mother and himself, the comforts it would provide, the education it would make possible ; and drawn like a bar-sinister of shadow across these brilliant pictures was the thought of the terrible price he would have to pay, of the shame that he would endure, when the manager learned that the boiling spring was a trick.

Masterson smoked in silence for a few moments, and then said : " Hit air a heap o' money, Cap'n, but you knows what yer a-doin'. Hit air a trade, an' yere's my hand on hit," and he extended that member to the manager, who took it in a hearty grasp, and rose to go.

Carey's mind was made up in an instant. He slipped unnoticed out of the door, and ran up the sidewalk to the porch of the company's store, which he knew Mr. Alcorn would pass on his way home. The light from within streamed out across the walk, and the boy stood waiting in the shadow

of one of the awning posts, fighting his battle over and over again as the minutes slipped by.

It was no easy thing which he was about to do ; he had had no training in the higher motives of life to fit him for so sharp a struggle with temptation. He could only repeat over and over : "Hit ain't right. Hit's a swin'le. I can't 'low hit to go on."

Fortunately he had not long to wait. He saw the door of his father's cottage open and then close behind the manager. As Mr. Alcorn stepped to the lighted space Carey plucked his sleeve.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" he said, turning quickly.

Carey tried to speak, but a lump came in his throat.

"What is it, my boy?" asked the manager.

"Hit's—hit's the spring, Cap'n Alcorn. You jes' mus'n't buy hit. Hit ain't a sure-enough b'iler. Me an' Dick Upton jes' stuck a piece o' hose on the ol' still in the cave, an' made it bile that-a-way."

"What old still, in what cave? Sit down here," said the manager, seating himself on an empty box.

Then Carey told the whole story of the discovery of the cave and its contents ; of Dick's happy thought, and how they ran an old piece of hose down through the hole in the cliff, burying one end among the loose stones in the bottom of the spring and attaching the other to the worm of the still, and so led the steam into the water—"Oho!" said Mr. Alcorn, interrupting. "That's where the copper came from!"—how they found it impossible to heat the spring while the natural flow was unchecked, and how they diverted this into another channel in the cave ; how they only intended it as a joke, and had no thoughts of serious results ; and then, almost in a whisper, he told of his ambitions and the dreadful temptation to keep silent. "I reckoned you ought to know 'bout the spring," he said, at the end of his story, "an' I 'lowed hit was owin' to tell you-all 'bout the other too."

The manager gazed steadily at the hanging lamp in the store for a few minutes, after the story was ended, and Carey thought

he was angry. When he finally spoke it was not to the point, for he arose and said that the lamp was uncommonly bright ; didn't Carey think so ? Whereupon Carey got down from the box, and "allowed" he'd go home and tell his father.

"That's right, my boy ; that's right. Always tell your father everything ; but just a word before you go. It may seem queer to you, but I'd rather have a cold spring than a hot one. I didn't buy it because it boiled, but because it's a mineral spring, and its water will make a great many sick people well again. And about your going to school—I'll talk to your father about that, and we'll see what can be done. Now you may run home and tell your father all about your joke. Good-night, my lad. There's no harm done."

PLAYING ESCORT.

BY J. L. HARBOUR.

I CAN laugh over the occurrence easily enough now, but for years after it happened any reference to the incident brought blushes to my cheeks and aroused my ill temper.

I was nearly eighteen when I conceived the idea of "playing the beau" to Elvira Croft, who had just arrived at the age of long dresses and "done up" hair. Her father's farm was about a mile from my home, and we sat with only a narrow aisle between us at the district school. I had given Elvira proof of the fact that she stood high in my favour by presenting her with the biggest and shiniest red apples I could find in my father's bin, and surreptitiously slipping across the aisle peppermint hearts having on them such open avowals of regard as "Will you be mine?" and "I am yours."

But it was one day in the early fall when the idea of coming out boldly as the beau of Elvira came to me. It was suggested by a boy of my own age named Lem Trueman, who confided to me that he was going to escort Matilda Davis to the county fair.

"Why don't you take some one to the fair with you, Dan?" he said. "Elvira Croft would go if you asked her to."

Lem's suggestion found such immediate favour with me that before the end of the day Elvira had received a note from me asking "for the pleasure of her company" on the following Thursday, which was to be the "big day" of the county fair.

In reply came a note to the effect that Elvira would "accept

of the company of Mr. Dan Burley," and I felt that I had gone from boyhood to manhood at a single bound.

The county fair was the great event of the year in the county in which I lived. The farms would be practically deserted on the "big day."

I had hoped that father would regard my first appearance as a beau as an event of such importance that he would offer me the use of Firefly, our handsomest and fastest horse, and the new buggy that we had recently purchased ; but father was a man who held to the opinion that it was not wise for parents to give their children the best of everything while they "played second fiddle themselves," as he put it.

My father was wise in another direction, too, for he never held his children up to ridicule, and when I had summoned up courage enough to tell him that I was to escort Elvira to the fair, he looked a good deal amused, but he said, in a kindly fashion :

"Very well. You may have old Dorcas and the old buggy. Your mother and I will want Firefly and the new buggy. You can wash the old one up, and it will look very well."

Old Dorcas was not a horse I would have chosen for so important an occasion. She was of uncertain temper, besides being awkward and ungainly in appearance. She had balked on several occasions, and she would snort and shy at the most insignificant object by the roadside. She was blind in one eye, and an accident had deprived her of the greater part of her left ear. No amount of feeding could conceal her ribs, and she was of a peculiarly ugly yellowish colour.

I spent all of one afternoon washing and oiling and rubbing the old buggy, which was an antiquated but still serviceable vehicle. I flattered myself that it did not look "so very bad" when I was through with it, and I felt grateful to mother when she came out into the stable yard and said :

"Why, you have made the old buggy look quite well, Dan. You will see far worse-looking vehicles than that at the fair."

"But I doubt if there is a more cantankerous old horse there than Dorcas," I said.

"Oh, but Dorcas sometimes goes almost as well as Firefly herself," said father. "She may be on her good behaviour that day."

"And she may not," I said, ominously.

But Dorcas behaved very well when I had hitched her to the buggy and we had started for Elvira's home on that Thursday morning. Elvira came out in a new pink and white gown and a wide blue sash, while her new Leghorn hat was all a-flutter with blue ribbons and nodding pink roses. Mr. and Mrs. Croft and Elvira's seven younger brothers and sisters were about to start for the fair when I drove up, and I wished that I had been a little later in arriving, for Elvira's brothers immediately began to call out, with much tittering and giggling :

"Aw, there's 'Viry's beau !"

"Sha-a-a-me on you, Dan Burley, a-going' with the girls !"

"You be awful careful of that new dress, 'Viry," said Mrs. Croft, as I helped Elvira to her seat. "Don't set on them long sash-ends in the buggy, and if it rains you'd better get under cover and not his't your new parasol and get it all wet the first time you carry it. And remember, 'Viry, that too much candy and sweet stuff is dreadful likely to make you sick."

With this motherly advice Mrs. Croft rode away and Elvira and I followed, but when we had gone a short distance Elvira said :

"Let's turn off the main road here and go around by the river road. It is but a little farther to town that way, and mother wanted me to ride by Grandmother Croft's house and leave her this pat of butter."

"Then your grandmother isn't going to the fair?" I said, glad of an opportunity to "make talk," for we had both been painfully silent up to that time.

"No," replied Elvira. "Grandmother hasn't been feeling very well lately, and she said day before yesterday, when she was over at our house, that she guessed she wouldn't try to go to the fair this year."

A ride of a mile brought us to the little red house in which old Mrs. Croft lived alone. She was an alert, independent,

little old woman, who was wise enough to decline to leave her own home and live with her married children after the death of her husband.

When we reached old Mrs. Croft's house we were surprised to see her come out into the forecourt in her black silk dress and with her bonnet on.

"Oh, it's you, 'Viry, is it?" she said, cheerily. "Seems to me you are startin' out young to have a beau, but young folks do a great many things now that they didn't do in my young days. What a homely horse! Your pa an' ma coming by this way, 'Viry?"

"No, grandmother," Elvira answered. "They all went straight on to town, and I came this way with the butter. You are not going to the fair, are you?"

"Yes, I be. I know that I have said all along that I guessed I wouldn't go this year, but I have felt so smart the last two days that I made up my mind this mornin' that I'd go, after all. I reckoned your pa an' ma would come by this way with the butter an' I could go with them, but I can go with you an' Dan just as well. I see the buggy has a good wide seat, an' I don't take up much room. I'll be ready in just a minute."

The old lady went hurriedly back into the house, and came out again in three or four minutes wearing a light summer shawl, and carrying in her hands a large, square, wicker basket with a cover.

"I just bet you can't either of you youngsters guess what I have in this basket," she said merrily.

Neither of the "youngsters" happened to be in a guessing mood, and when we made no reply to the old lady's tentative remark, she said:

"Well, it's my big Maltee' cat, and I never thought that I could give him away to any one, but he has taken to catching and killing my young chickens—the rascal! Cousin Hannah was admiring the cat the last time she was here, an' she said she'd give anything for one like him, an' so I am goin' to take him in to her. You hold the basket, 'Viry, while I climb in. Keep that horse still, can't you, boy?"

Old Dorcas never was a good "stander," and she had grown restive, and was pawing the ground and moving about a little. She started up when she felt Grandmother Croft's foot on the buggy step, and nearly threw the old lady to the ground.

"Keep the critter still, I tell you!" exclaimed Mrs. Croft, when she made a second attempt to get into the buggy and the horse backed a few inches. "I guess you ain't much of a driver, be you, boy?"

Once inside the buggy, the old lady seated herself between Elvira and me, and when I let Dorcas have the reins the horse gave evidence of being in a rollicking mood by kicking up her heels and neighing loudly as we started away.

"For pity sake!" exclaimed the old lady. "What ails the critter, to cut up like that? It'll be a mercy if we ain't all upset and killed before we get to town! Hold them reins tight, bub!"

"Bub" was even more offensive to me than "boy," and I keenly resented any interference with my driving.

"Look out for that big rock by the side of the road, boy!" said the old lady, as Dorcas went cantering down the road. A moment later the horse shied at a rabbit by the road, and Grandmother Croft cried out:

"Mercy on us, if we didn't nearly go over that time! Don't let the critter go splashing right through that mud-puddle, boy!"

Old Dorcas was "hard-mouthed," and all my pulling on the reins could not keep her from dashing into the mud-puddle.

"Just look at the mud on your bran'-new dress, 'Viry Croft!" exclaimed the old lady. "What will your mother say? I think that the next time I had a beau I'd get one who knew how to drive! Look out there! It's a mercy we didn't go over that stump by the roadside! You'd better let me drive, boy!"

"We'd get upset for sure then," I said, not meaning to be impertinent, but stating what I felt sure was true, for no one but father or myself could drive Dorcas when she was in either a frisky or a sullen mood.

After we had gone a mile or more I began to dread our return to the main road, for I knew that there we should be likely to overtake or be overtaken by some of my boy friends.

Lem Trueman was an inveterate tease, and I dreaded his ridicule if he should chance to see Elvira and me with Grandmother Croft between us.

The cat was growing more and more restive with each yard of the journey, and we could hear him miauing and snarling while he clawed and bit at the basket in his efforts to get out.

"I wonder if the poor thing has air enough," said the old lady, just as we entered a long stretch of timber. "You all het up in there, kitty?"

She opened the lid of the basket an inch or more, and the cat thrust out his paw and scratched the old lady's hand. She drew her hand away, and the cat suddenly leaped from the basket and down to the ground.

"Stop the horse! Stop him!" exclaimed Mrs. Croft. "Jump out and get that cat, boy! I wouldn't lose that cat for anything! Here, I'll hold the reins! Run after that cat!"

I had always been taught strict obedience to my elders, and I handed the old lady the reins and jumped from the buggy.

"Keep a tight rein on the horse," I said.

"Oh, I'll manage the horse. I've driven horses before you were born, my son. Hurry after that cat before it gets entirely away!"

I ran madly after the fleeing cat, which was now racing swiftly away, while the old lady was calling out:

"Kitty, kitty, kitty, kitty!"

I had gone about a hundred yards when I saw the cat dart up a tree. I requested him to come down in words not altogether polite, but the cat paid no heed.

Seeing that there was no help for it, I threw off my coat and shoes and proceeded to climb the tree. The cat retreated to the extreme end of a long branch, from which coign of vantage he bade me defiance in snarls such as I had never before heard from throat of cat.

Finding that it was impossible to reach the cat, I seized the

branch to which he was clinging and shook it so violently that the creature lost his grip and fell to the ground, snarling and spitting furiously. He was a hundred yards away by the time I reached the ground and pulled on my shoes and coat.

"You—got—that—cat?" I heard Grandmother Croft call at me, shrilly, from her seat in the chaise.

Not—yet!" I screamed in reply.

"Well—you—git—him!" came back to me, and I started in the direction the cat had gone.

Suddenly he darted from a clump of bushes, and with a snarl of defiance ran up another small tree. Again I pulled off my shoes and hat, and just as I had done so the cat jumped upon a dead branch. Cat and branch came to the ground, and the cat raced toward the road. I followed, with my shoes and coat in my hands.

Grandmother Croft saw him coming, and in her excitement she stood up in the buggy, calling the cat by name. He flew across the road in front of old Dorcas. The horse reared, and then raced wildly down the road.

Fortunately Grandmother Croft did not fall from the buggy, nor did she drop the reins. The sudden plunging forward of the horse caused her to sit down very suddenly and very hard on the seat of the buggy, and frightened as she was, she did not lose her presence of mind. She tugged with all her strength at the reins, and called out:

"Whoa! Whoa, there! Whoa!"

But Dorcas paid no heed to this command, and all the old lady's pulling on the reins had little effect on the hard mouth of the horse. She flew down the road in a cloud of dust, and I ran after her with my hat and shoes still in my hand.

Realising the impossibility of overtaking the horse, and being quite out of breath, I sat down, hot and panting, to put on my shoes by the roadside. I was sitting there gasping for breath, and with the perspiration streaming down my crimson cheeks, when a buggy suddenly swept around a curve in the road, and before I could hide I found myself facing Lem Trueman and Matilda Davis.

"Well, what on earth!" exclaimed Lem, as he drew rein.

"Why, it's Dan Burley!" said Matilda. "I thought you were going to take 'Viry Croft to the fair."

"I thought so, too," I said sulkily.

"Pshaw, Dan, tell us all about it!" exclaimed Lem. "Who cut you out?"

"Her grandmother and her grandmother's cat!" I said desperately.

"Her grandmother? Wouldn't she let her go with you? And where did the cat come in?"

"In the buggy, for one place."

As there was no way out of it, I had to tell Lem and Matilda the whole story, and I was not surprised when Lem leaned back in the buggy and made the woods ring with his shouts of laughter, while Matilda tittered behind her handkerchief. Lem laughed until he was as red in the face as I was. Then he said, with real sympathy and kindness:

"Get right into the buggy with us, and we will take you on to town, and we'll see what has become of old Dorcas and the other ladies of your party."

I got in with them, and Lem drove on as rapidly as possible. When we reached a point in the road within a quarter of a mile of the town, we found old Dorcas hitched to a fencepost panting for breath after her long run.

Grandmother Croft and Elvira were sitting in the buggy. The little old woman was fanning herself vigorously, and when we drew near she said, triumphantly:

"You see she didn't git away from me! It takes a smarter critter than this old rackabones to git away from Salindy' Croft. I just wrapped them reins around my hands an' kep her right in the road an' let her go it till the old crazytic winded herself an' she ca'med down like a lamb. But if I owned this hoss I'd kill her!"

I had the same feeling about a certain cat, but I did not say so.

One of the rear wheels had been so badly injured by hitting

a tree that the buggy was unsafe for any one to ride farther in it. Elvira and her grandmother got in with Matilda, and Lem and I walked on ahead, leading old Dorcas.

The blacksmith to whom I took the buggy said that it would have to have a new wheel, and when I finally found father and consulted with him in regard to the matter, he said that the old buggy was not worth it, and the result was that Elvira rode home with her father and mother and I went home with my parents.

Thus ended most ingloriously my first attempt at playing the beau, but there came a time when I forgave Grandmother Croft the part she had in adding to the disappointment and chagrin of that day.

That time was when I called her grandmother myself, and when she came with her knitting and her cheery chatter to spend the day with Elvira and me in our own home. I had to confess that she told the truth when she said: "I reckon that the cat an' me did put you out consid'able that day, didn't we, Dan'l?"

YONKITT'S STRATAGEM.

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

FROM the *Norman*, a store-ship which was anchored off Resolution Island, near Hudson Strait, in 18—, a boat had been lowered on one of those cold arctic mornings after a white bear that had been seen for a moment amongst drifting masses of ice in the distance.

The occupants of the boat were seven men, together with the Captain, Thomas Nye, and his son Wilfred, the latter a fine healthy-looking boy of sixteen. He wore a fur cap, a seal-skin coat, carried a haversack, and had a rifle. His father and two of the men were similarly armed. As they approached the ice, they met Yonkitt, a dwarfish Eskimo youth, who had several times visited the ship, and who now, in his shaggy deer-skin coat, trousers, and boots, sat doubled up like a ball, paddling his canoe with might and main. The canoe, a beautiful one made of seal-skin, was sharp at both ends, and so transparent that the summer sunlight seemed to gleam through it.

"Hulloa, Yonkitt! You look frightened," cried the Captain, as both vessels were stopped.

Yonkitt then explained that while trying to catch a young seal alive for the Captain, who had agreed to buy one of him if thus obtained, he had been scared away by the growl of a bear.

"We are after that very bear," said the Captain. "I promised my friend, the same naturalist who wants the live seal, that I would also bring him home a white bear's skin.

Here, lad, are presents for you if you'll guide us to where you heard that growl."

So saying, he offered the native a small looking-glass and a little ornamental cake of soap from a shaving-box, always carried with him on his trips. Yonkitt took the presents, but instead of putting the soap in his pocket he thrust it into his mouth and promptly swallowed it.

"Bah!" cried the cockswain of the boat. "Be off with your uncivilised tricks!"

He was about to push the Eskimo back, when Wilfred, interposing, cried: "No, no! I'll not let you treat Yonkitt roughly. All his people are having hard times now, and he is very hungry. Here, chummy," he added, giving the native a sandwich from his haversack; "there's something for you better than soap."

It would have done you good to witness Yonkitt's keen relish for the feast. Wilfred, thinking it a jolly sight to see what big mouthfuls he took at every bite, enjoyed feeding him from his hand with more sandwiches. Very grateful was the little savage for this trifling kindness. He readily guided the party to a cave on the iceberg whence the bear's growl had seemed to come; then he went off to continue his hunt for such a young seal as the Captain wanted.

The sailors commenced their search for the bear. The middle of the iceberg was about twenty-five feet high, and the cave was in its centre, with an arched opening, through which the sun lighted a part of the crystal walls, that glistened as if sprinkled with gems.

On the right side of the cave were many deep hollows, but on the left Wilfred saw only one low aperture, through which he crawled, to emerge into a long open passage about fifteen feet high, disclosing through the farther end a water channel that washed a broad icy platform extending from the base to the berg. Looking up, he suddenly caught a glimpse of the bear's shaggy back above a crystal ridge, near a huge cracked ice-shaft that overhung the passage. Raising his rifle, he fired. The report echoed like thunder among the hollows

of the berg. Then there was an awful crash, and the lad sprang back just in time to save his life, and the great ice-shaft, dislodged by the shock of the rifle's peal, fell, breaking to fragments, which, in a pile ten feet deep, blocked the opening through which he had crept, separating him from the Captain and his men. Through the numerous little chinks between the pieces, however, his father's anxious call reached him.

"Wilfred! Wilfred! Are you safe? Unhurt?"

"Ay, ay, sir!" shouted back the youth.

He then explained what had happened, described his situation, and added that he did not think he had hit the bear when he fired.

Cautioning him to be careful, the Captain said he would try to reach him by pulling round through the ice to the channel on the other side.

Thus, soon left alone on that floating berg, Wilfred moved through the passage to the platform, on which the farther end opened, and which bordered the channel alluded to.

Where now was the bear? He could see no sign of it at first, but presently he heard a sort of crackling sound, and looking that way, there, sure enough, he beheld the head of the animal, with its short ears, its ugly nose, and pointed face, half projected through a mass of pendent icicles overhanging an opening in a ridge that extended from the base of the berg out upon the crystal platform. The brute's eyes glared, and it growled as Wilfred raised his rifle. Before he could fire it disappeared, and he heard a splash. The creature had evidently taken to the water, and, moving around the ridge, the boy saw a large pool into which the monster had probably plunged. The white bear is an excellent swimmer and diver, and Wilfred expected to see it come up in the channel that washed the ice platform. But he watched for it there in vain. It must have risen somewhere amongst the drifting masses beyond that bordered this channel. Suddenly he heard a rippling sound behind him, and turned to behold the uncouth tusked face of a walrus thrust, with

its strange round eyes, from the pool. The face quickly vanished. A few moments later the pool was violently agitated, and up rose the head and breast of the white bear, which, it was now evident, had been in pursuit of the walrus.

Wilfred, aiming quickly, fired directly at the brute's head, but it chanced that this was lowered at the same instant, as the beast scrambled out of the pool upon the ice. The bullet, therefore, only grazed the top of the skull, and now the bear, unhurt, stood with its whole form revealed to the boy.

A fierce-looking creature it was, being about four feet high and seven feet long. It was of a dull white colour, and was gaunt and wild with hunger. All over its body, caught by its thick hairs from the waters through which it had swum, little particles of ice glittered like so many jewels, giving a sort of grim beauty to this terrible king of arctic brutes. A deep hoarse growl escaped its cavernous chest. With long majestic strides it advanced upon Wilfred, who, retreating backward, tried to load his piece before the animal could reach him. It was close to him before he was ready to aim. With a snap its teeth closed over the rifle-barrel, just below the muzzle. In an instant the weapon was wrenched from his grasp by those powerful jaws and dropped upon the ice. As it was at full cock, the jar caused it to go off. The bear drew back, as if surprised. Again it advanced, pawed at the rifle, smelt it, bit it, and finally threw it contemptuously aside with its mouth. Taking advantage of the brief delay, Wilfred, thus disarmed of his piece, had retreated. But he had not gone ten yards when his further progress was prevented by a steep frozen ledge extending from the perpendicular side of the berg. He saw the bear again making for him. The ledge was a little over nine feet high. If he could gain the top of it, he would be out of reach of his pursuer.

A strong-looking ice-spur projected from near the summit of the slippery wall. From his belt he pulled a small sheath-

knife he carried. He thrust the blade in a crack of the wall about two feet above the base. Upon this he stepped. Giving a sort of spring, he had nearly clutched the spur by which he had intended to draw himself to the top of the ledge, when he felt the knife give way under his foot. Down he went, temporarily spraining his ankle. The bear was not fifteen feet away, coming at him with glowing eyes and yawning mouth. Wilfred then heard a shout, and beheld Yonkitt in his canoe paddling out of the ice-drifts toward the frozen platform, though it seemed as if he would be too late for a rescue. The imperilled boy saw no chance of escape. He had not the smallest weapon for defence. He thought of his knife, but on looking down where it lay near his feet, he perceived that it had been broken by his weight upon it when it was in the crevice of the ledge. In any event, the dull blade would have served him poorly against such an opponent.

His formidable foe was now close to him. Growling terribly, it ran forward to seize him with its powerful bristling jaws. Then something whizzed through the air. It was Yonkitt's spear hurled from his canoe, which had been paddled into a narrow inlet of the ice platform. Thrown so far, the weapon missed its aim, merely grazing the animal's shaggy breast, the upper end striking its mouth. It caught the handle by the middle and savagely bit it in two. At the same moment Yonkitt came up, rushing toward the beast with a wild shout. The bear, diverted from Wilfred by the spear and the shout, made for its new enemy. The latter was so close to the brute that it seemed to Wilfred he could not escape. To the boy's surprise, the Eskimo did not retreat. As the monster came at him, he suddenly held up before it something he had brought from the canoe slung across his shoulder in his net. Through the meshes of the net Wilfred now perceived a shining object that wriggled wildly about in its prison. It was, in fact, a beautiful young seal, which the native had captured alive to sell to Captain Nye, as he had been requested to do. Now, however,

it was used for a different purpose. No sooner did Bruin see this tempting morsel than he uttered a hungry sort of roar. Then Yonkitt flung it as far from him as he could upon the ice, and the bear at once ran after it.

"Kah! yah! kah!" cried the little Eskimo, gleefully, as he assisted the limping, grateful youth toward the canoe. "Yonkitt afraid of bear, but him risk life to save boy who take him part, and been so kind, and give him eat. Heigh! Yaw! See! Fadder come!" and Wilfred beheld his father's boat dashing out from among the masses of ice toward the bear, which now had the seal in its mouth. Then came the simultaneous report of three rifles, and the white monster, with as many bullets in its head, fell dead upon the icy floor. Great was the Captain's joy at his son's escape, and his gratitude to the Eskimo who had saved his life. After the bear's skin had been taken off, the whole party, Yonkitt included, went back to the ship, when Captain Nye loaded his boy's rescuer with provisions and presents.

But even this poor savage was too noble to accept a reward for risking his life to save the youth who had been kind to him, and before the vessel sailed away he had paid for the presents with many beautiful seal-skins.

IN DANGER'S HOUR.



"GET BACK!" HE SCREAMED AGAIN.

IN DANGER'S HOUR.



TALES OF A DEEP-SEA DIVER.

BY ARTHUR E. MCFARLANE.

I.—TRAINING A NOVICE.

IT was a warm May afternoon, and the Lower Bay was a beautiful shifting green under the glancing sunlight. The mast of the sunken schooner rippled slowly up and down in the water like some great sea-snake balancing itself perpendicularly just below the surface.

The head diver was dangling his iron-shod boots over the side of the tug, and eating his long-delayed luncheon. A newspaper lay on top of the big copper helmet beside him, and he was reading while he ate.

"Pah!" he muttered at last. "So these fool hazing tricks still go on. Now it's one poor lad painted over with molasses and lampblack, and another rolled up in fly-paper. I suppose if it had been midwinter they'd have been made to run around the college in their bare skins. There's no mortal sense or fairness in the thing. It's a coward's game, too, for the victim is always relied on not to tell. It's a mean, dirty business! And, mind, I'm not goody-goody. If the hazing was of a kind that in the end would be of some good to the boy hazed I wouldn't have anything to say against it.

"You imagine that that sort of hazing is pretty rare? Well, perhaps it is, though I was thinking of an experience I had

myself. But I'll admit that was one sort in a thousand, for it was presided over by what you might call one of the professors of the college I was joining, and the university authorities looked on with approval. I'm speaking of my initiation into the diving business.

"That was away back in '75. The government had just established a training-ship for the navy, the *Minnesota*, and that year I was one of the three hundred lads aboard her.

"Now, although the department at Washington had been using divers for some time,—in fact, during the war it had had in its pay about all there were in this country and a lot more from Europe,—it had never done anything toward getting a staff of deep-sea men for its own regular service. Well, down at Port Royal there were divers in plenty, and the government had for a long time been owning a lot of submarine gear ; so it was only natural that it should come into the head of somebody among those who control such things, that we lads of the *Minnesota* were the raw material needed, so to speak, and with the proper training could furnish Uncle Sam with his long-wanted naval diving squad. When they laid the question before us I was one of forty to volunteer.

"Indeed, we were all so eager that the diving gear was ordered up to New York at once, and with it old Tom Parke, a famous deep-sea man of Port Royal, to take charge of us. He was to test us by a few preliminary exercises, as you might call them,—it was really hazing, pure and simple,—and then give those who wanted to go on a thorough course in the 'submarine.'

"We found out later that old Tom had his own opinion of the wisdom of bringing a lot of new men into the profession, and wasn't planning to make their entry the very easiest possible—but I'll come to that in time.

"The *Minnesota* was anchored at the New York Battery that summer, and when the diving equipment arrived, the first calm, sunny day saw more than thirty of us lads under a junior officer making for the shoal water off Ellis Island. We had two seamen with us for air-pump and 'tender' service,

and of course old Tom. On the way over he taught us some of the commonest under-sea signals, laying particular emphasis on the three jerks we were to give when we'd had enough and wanted to be pulled up.

"We stopped about a hundred yards offshore in two and a half or three fathoms, and old Tom took us as we were numbered. I came sixth, and a little Ohio lad—Appleworth, I think he was called—was the first to go down. They lowered him slowly, and then our 'professor' turned his eye on the air-dial and gave the men at the pump a few instructions.

"Well, in about two minutes Appleworth was giving the three jerks, and giving them like a crazy man, too, 'repeating' about every five seconds till his helmet was out of the water. But he didn't seem able to tell us what had frightened him. He only looked sheepish, and said he thought 'the air-hose was going to come off or something, and he guessed diving wasn't just the thing for him, for he had a weak heart.' Now I need hardly say that Uncle Sam doesn't let boys with weak hearts get into his navy, so you may imagine it was a long time before Appleworth heard the last of *his*.

"Cook of Massachusetts was the next, and old Tom didn't have to do anything with him—he didn't have time to, in fact, for before his feet could have touched bottom the signal-line was going like a door-bell wire on New Year's day.

"And it didn't stop jerking at three, either, but kept right on to thirty or forty. That wasn't in the code-book, but the men seemed to infer he wanted to come out, and pretty soon they had him over the side. Even through the quarter-inch helmet glass his face was as white as the under side of a frog.

"'It was a shark!' he gasped, when they had unscrewed his head-piece, and then of course we all howled with laughter again.

"But Cook was in dead earnest, and appealed to old Tom, and that old fraud said:

"'Mebbe there mought be sharks in New York Bay, and then again, mebbe there moughtn't. No man could tell for certain the things what's in the deep sea.'

"But none the less he began to get ready for the third man in a way that showed his own fears weren't overpowering; so whatever secret doubts some of us might possibly have had for a minute or two very soon subsided.

"Dickerson, a lanky, drawling, solemn sort of Hoosier,—he was the oldest of us *Minnesota* boys,—was the third to get into the under-sea togs, and then, as always, Dickerson proved his pluck. I guess that for a while old Tom thought he should have to let him through, for when he got to the bottom he tramped around in a matter-of-fact way, and made the tenders give and take line till you'd have thought he was working on the coast survey. And when, after about fifteen minutes of that, they pulled him up, old Tom looked pretty puzzled.

"‘How'd it go?’ he asked.

"‘Not so *terrible* bad,’ says Dickerson, ‘but I’m bound to say that part of the time I felt as if I was drawing my wind through a forty-foot pine log, and no hollow-core pine, either. I suppose, though, that learning to breathe, or not to breathe, according as it’s most convenient, is part of the profession.’

"‘Oh, no, not *necessar*’ly,’ said old Tom. ‘I reckon your escape-valve let air out too easy. That’s no great shakes to fix.’

"Then he snapped an elastic band about the escape-cap, and that manœuvre’s about the same as hanging a brick on a safety-valve. Dickerson’s supply of air was secure enough then.

"‘Try how it goes now,’ said old Tom, and they let Dickerson down again.

"This time he wasn’t long coming up, and he came of himself, too, his legs first, kicking somewhat; but on the whole he drifted up deliberately and mysteriously, like a bubble in oil, and when he reached the surface he just sprawled out there and swelled. He was pretty near ‘drum-tight.’ He was like a six-foot rubber doll.

"His legs stiffened out and stayed there, and he couldn’t bring in his arms any more than if he hadn’t had any shoulder or elbow-joints. Sometimes old Tom would slacken off the

pressure for a while, and then Dickerson would begin to sink, kicking and thrashing around fiercely, too. But when he was only a yard or so down there'd be more air sent into his clothes, and up he'd come again, serene and graceful as ever.

"We lads lay down in the bottom of the cutter and held our hands on our sides. It was the funniest thing we'd ever seen in our lives. But the joke didn't seem to penetrate Dickerson's intellect; probably he was wearing too much air padding for it to get through, for after about five minutes of wallowing there, filling and emptying, he managed to get hold of the line, and the jerks he gave it were ferocious.

"'Air pressure's a kind of a hard thing to reggilate,' said old Tom, when Dickerson was getting out of the suit, his breath coming and going like steam-power with the eccentric off. 'Sometimes you can't seem to get enough down to your man, and then again sometimes it seems as if he was really getting a leetle too much. But you get used to that when you've been diving for a while.'

"'Well,' said Dickerson, drawing a long breath, and no doubt he took a heap of satisfaction in being able to limit the size of it, 'it may be there's a mighty sight of enjoyment in being a diver; there's no use disputing about people's likes and dislikes. But for my part, if it comes down to occupations, I think I'd considerably rather be the bellows in a blacksmith's shop.'

"Well, the two boys who came after him got their discouragements in one way or another, and old Tom, although he was certainly having things his own way, did not betray himself with even a grin. He just absent-mindedly watched the lads get enough of it, one after the other. That got my blood up, and when it came my turn, I made up my mind that I was going to stand a lot of hazing before I'd let the old boy take away my hankering for the deep sea. And I did, too.

"I've been down a good many hundred times since, but I'll never forget the succession of new, queer and mighty uncomfortable sensations I went through in that half-hour.

I got to the bottom safe enough, and although I felt pretty ponderous dragging those cast-iron soles of mine over the sand, I knew I couldn't expect it to be like taking a walk down Broadway in a spring overcoat and patent leather shoes ; so I didn't worry much about that.

"I saw Cook's shark, too, a big fish which, through the heavy glass of the face-plate, seemed ten times bigger ; but when I'd got a second look at it, *that* didn't bother me, either. Indeed, my first five minutes under water went along all right.

"Then, without any warning, the air in my helmet began to grow less and less, and I knew I was in for it. However, I knew, too, that it was only a matter of a few minutes, and I resolved to see the thing through some way or other. That part of my hazing proved to be not so bad as you might think.

"I took long, slow breaths, and when I got settled down to it, it wasn't so much worse than the feeling you have when taking gas at a dentist's. My head seemed to get farther and farther away, and I grew so drowsy that I thought I was going to fall over asleep. But I stood planted in one place, not making the slightest exertion, and after what seemed about an hour they began to haul me up.

"Old Tom watched me filling myself with the salt sea air when they'd got my helmet off, and he said in a sympathetic way, 'Seems like you hadn't been getting wind enough down there.' I didn't make any answer, for I knew it was no use. 'Reckon you'd better have a little more,' he added, and snapped the elastic on the escape-valve.

"I thought it was being made to look so silly and helpless that made Dickerson weaken when his clothes were filled with air, but I soon found out there was a good deal more than being made to look ridiculous in that experience. Old Tom began on me a few minutes after I'd reached bottom, and the first thing I knew I began to *grow light*.

"I don't suppose I can give you any idea of how that felt, or why it was one of the meanest, uncanniest sensations I have

ever experienced. But if you can imagine yourself trying to grip the bottom with your iron-soled boots, yet afraid to press hard for fear of shoving it away from you, while every little motion you made gives you a jump up into the water, and then if you'll think of yourself slowly but surely losing balance, and in spite of all your egg-treading and back-stiffening turning heels upward and swinging gradually to the top like a human balloon—if you can imagine that, you'll get some idea of the way I felt and why I didn't like it.

“But only when I reached the surface did things become really interesting, for by that time my clothes were about chock-full. My body was like a New England feather tick, and my arms and legs like nothing so much as the bolsters. And I just lay spread-eagled there and swallowed wind.

“My little nephew once filled up his baby sister with air from a bicycle-pump, and when I heard of it I knew exactly how that poor child felt, for I was simply inflated myself. I could feel myself swelling like a batch of bread. All my heart and my will-power seemed to grow flabby, too; my arms ached to get at that signal-line and have the agony over.

“But when the pressure did slacken off, and I could have reached it, I gritted my teeth together and didn't. And so, after we'd wrestled away for a good ten minutes, old Tom had to pull me into the boat a second time.

“But although I took it for granted I'd won fairly and was through, he didn't make any motion toward getting me out of the suit. Indeed, when he'd meditated for a time, he said as calmly as if he were testing a plumb-line between us, ‘Now I reckon you'd like to try it in deeper water.’ After the first jolt of disappointment I pulled myself together again, and said ‘All right.’ The boys took the cutter out another fifty yards or so, and the tenders lowered me over a third time.

“In about half a minute I naturally began to ease up my knee-joints so as to land easy on the bottom—but there wasn't any bottom! There wasn't any in the next long minute, either, nor yet while I counted one hundred as slowly

as I could with my breath going like a choked exhaust-pump and my heart thumping away up in my ears.

"Then I 'cold-prickled' all over. All the time the water got steadily darker as I sank deeper. I remembered what I'd heard of those great chasms in the bed of the ocean, like the Colorado cañon; and I'd read, too, that it didn't need more than a forty or fifty-fathom pressure to send a diver's body up with the armour and helmet crushed and kneaded into it like so much crumpled lead-paper.

"I thought of all that, but I thought, too, 'Well, I'm not dead yet, anyway, and I can hold on a few seconds longer.' Half a dozen times I reached up through the black water for the line, but every time I managed to hold my courage, and didn't pull. I began to sicken, though, and then, well then I suddenly felt my feet on bottom. There I stood, weak and shuddering, till, after an age, they hauled me up for the last time."

The master diver began to get ready for his afternoon work.

"Do you know how deep I'd been that time?" he asked, before his assistant screwed his helmet on. "Not quite six fathoms, and old Tom had simply hoaxed me within an ace of losing my wits by one of the commonest tricks in the deep-sea joke-book. He knew that I couldn't know anything about the real colour of great depths, and what was much more, he knew, too, that if a diver is lowered with perfect steadiness he's completely at sea as to how fast or how slow he's going. That's one of the very strange things about our profession. I had been let down at the rate of about five feet a minute, yet had no doubt whatever that I was going a good thirty.

"But the main thing is that that was old Tom's last card, and he hadn't made me give the three jerks. As soon as I learned how I'd been fooled—and I felt pretty silly, I confess, when I thought of the way my imagination had played with me—I said I was ready to go ahead with it; and that broke his hold on us.

"The rest of the lads went through mighty rigorous treatment, too, but they knew now that they could take with safety all he dared to give, and they stuck out twice as well for knowing it. Of the twenty-nine who came after me, seven stepped out of the 'sea clothes' smiling, and eight of us made up the first regular government diving squad. Sometimes I've been called the father of it, but that's nonsense; yet I've always felt happy enough that it was my luck to be the first.

"And now for the point I started out to make. Old Tom had really done the best thing possible for all of us, for of the thousand and one professions on this earth, that of diving is the very worst for the man who is only 'half-way.' You have to be ready to take everything that comes without losing your courage, or you're bound to be an everlasting misery to yourself and every one else engaged with you.

"That hazing had kept a number of the boys from leaving a service they were happy and at home in, and it had let the rest of us go into the new work with our eyes open to what it meant. And so I say that that kind of hazing is as good a thing as the other sort you read of every day is silly and mean and cowardly."

As he spoke the old diver took up his helmet and nodded to his helpers; a few minutes more, and he was ten fathoms past replying to.

II.—AN ADVENTURE WITH A GIANT SQUID.

THE master diver was turning over some of his old helmets. Long and corrupting acquaintance with salt water had left the tinned-over copper bulbs a rusty, greenish grey.

"Why don't I keep them polished up?" he said. "Because they're a great deal better the way they are. A shiny new helmet is one eternal nuisance; you never get any peace till it's coated over. When I'm wearing one, I always feel as if my head was a sort of trolling-spoon; anyhow, most fish regard it that way. And I must say they do certainly seem to be trying their level best to be caught.

"I often think that with the majority of sea-beasts life must be one long struggle between a natural wariness and a more than natural curiosity. They've all been brought up to give a wide offing to things they don't understand; but it's bred in their bone to want to see and keep up with everything that's new. And when it's something that's got a glitter or polish to it, all that their parents and guardians have taught them from the beginning of time isn't going to hold them back.

"And no one has such opportunities to find that out as the diver. At first, when you're being lowered, there's nothing but a flicker of tails disappearing in every direction; but after a while, and very soon if you're wearing a new head-piece, you begin to make out big pairs of goggle eyes staring at you from the under-sea twilight, and they gradually move in closer and closer. In a few minutes probably they'll be making little darts at your fingers and swishing their tails across your face.

"And yet in some cases they may not be at all hesitating about introducing themselves. Down in the West Indies there's a fish of the forward sort. That's the booby. Did you ever see a skate when a fishman's tied a cord around his neck, bent his silly face forward, and set him up on a table to keep things gay and humorous in the market? Well, a booby looks something like that.

"But with all his amazing ugliness, it isn't the booby's looks

so much as his overwhelming suddenness that makes him unpopular with deep-sea men. A diver goes down, and along with the other fish the booby hears of it. But is he shy and timid about coming forward? The minute he hears of a miraculous stranger in his midst, my, but he does more than 'want to know!' He's not even content to 'wait for the extrys' as you might say; he's got to rush straight down-town and see the bulletins!

"The first thing the unsuspecting diver knows, he's hit plump in the forward face-plate; and between his being jarred liked a ship in a bow-on collision, and his being given the firm belief that he's had a visit from the very old grinning demon of the under-sea himself, he's ready to put for the surface like a stampeded derrick-hoist, and do his recovering slow and at leisure. He's lucky if the booby hasn't tried the thickness of both his side-plates, too, before he's safe over the gunwale!

"There's another sea-beast that has his own peculiar curiosity, and that's the giant squid; but there's nothing so very humorous about their little prying inquisitiveness. Once in the Mediterranean one gave me a half-hour which I thought would leave me grey-headed. Just how near it was to being my last dive I'll never know.

"It happened in the end of the summer, when I'd been on that job near Shanghai, and I was coming home by way of Suez when I got a wire at Port Said from head-quarters directing me to take my gear and side-track myself direct to Palermo, Sicily. When I got there—and I didn't lose any time making connections—I found that a badly moored liner had pinched a big lighter between herself and the mole,—the long stone wharf and breakwater the Palermese are so proud of,—and, smashing it abeam, had sent it to the bottom. It was a government lighter, and its cargo was an unusually valuable one,—would run to £8,000 or £10,000 in English money,—and I was to do what I could toward hoisting a good fat salvage out of it.

"It was simple, easy work. There were two or three hundred medium-sized cases to derrick up, and for me it wasn't much more than snap-to the chain-hooks and give the word to haul away.

"In fact, there was only one thing which kept the job from being exactly the kind I like ; I couldn't seem to make good tenders of the Italian seamen they'd given me to work with. They would pump steadily enough, but had no head at all for signal-taking ; and before long I was practically regulating my air supply, and timing my descents for myself.

"I never got too little wind, and when I got too much I simply opened a wristband and flabbied out in no time. Then, too, I had a leaded cable ladder dropped from the side of the mole to the deck of the lighter, and I climbed up and down that without any useless telegraphing. After the first week, I told them not to bother looking for any signals but those to let down and haul up the hoisting tackle.

"For all the Italians were stupid about a diving 'hose and line,' they were mighty good fellows ; and in the evenings, when they could get off, I had great times with them and their friends. Queerly enough, too, most of my fun was in going fishing for the squid. Their way of catching it was a new idea to me. They take twenty-foot cane poles, and fasten bunches of sturgeon hooks to the ends of them, like a lot of very short lashes on very long whip-stocks ; and they manage to get '*Signor Pulpu*'—as the polite Palermese call the beast—tangled up in them pretty badly.

"They do their fishing on nights when there's a moon, for squid make it their habit to spend their day out at sea and to come back inshore late in the evening. When it is moonlight they can be spotted very easily, for they swim just below the surface, and their pinwheel motion roughens up the water above them till the bright silver is in oxidised whorls. As soon as a *pulpu* has circled himself into striking distance a bunch of hooks is slid under him, and one fine Italian twist and jerk does his business before he knows what's killed him.

"And they're not slaughtered wantonly, either, but for the pot and oven, like any other fish. Although I was naturally rather stand-offish about them at first, after I'd tasted them boiled in oil and caraway seed, and lathered over with egg-

plant sauce, I couldn't help owning that my countrymen aren't the only people who know what's good.

"I suppose, too, my eating them changed my way of looking at squid a lot; anyhow, even while we caught most of them off the very mole that I was working beside, I don't think I gave two anxious thoughts to them when I was in the water. More than likely that was because those I'd seen caught never weighed more than twenty-five pounds, and because I took it for granted that they were all out at sea in my working hours. Well, they weren't all under twenty-five pounds, or all out at sea in daylight, either!

"I learned this one afternoon when something went wrong with the jerry-rigged derrick we were using. For half an hour no tackle had come down to me, and at last I got tired of doing nothing. I'd never been between-decks at all, for as the boat was a common lighter, everything I'd had to handle was piled up above; but now that I had the time, I thought I'd like to see how the Sicilian lighterman had his living quarters furnished. So I climbed down the hatchway ladder.

"You often hear people speaking of 'black darkness,' and, as I've had cause to know, it's possible for some caves and mine cuttings to be pretty pitchy; but they're nothing to what the hold of a wreck can show. When you're down any depth to speak of, there's almost no such thing as refracted light; if you don't get it in the form of direct rays, you don't get it at all.

"When I stepped out of the shaft of hatchway twilight into the 'tween-decks shadow it was like passing through a curtain; and as I felt my way towards where the cook's galley ought to be, it was like thrusting my arms and legs into a new element—one thicker than water, and not even liquid; it was kind of furry and seemed to slide and creep.

"It had its effect on me, and the gloom and 'lonesome horrors' that no diver working in darkness is ever without, were beginning to crawl over me, when suddenly something whipped and closed itself about my wrist. It was like a big roll of cold, slippery elastic.

"It held me only a moment, but it left me water-kneed, goose-fleshed and swallowing. I don't know where my blood went to, but I know it dropped out of my heart as if an exhaust had been opened in the bottom of it ; and on my feet were the pigs of lead that hold you down in nightmares.

"I stayed there, listening to my pulse beating in my ears and feeling myself grow sick ; and when I did pull myself together enough to reach for the signal line, my arm was clutched like a flash. The next moment my other was a prisoner, too. Then the tentacles began to nose about all over me like eels.

"I did not need my eyes to know what it was. I'd heard of the curiosity of the giant rock-squid, and I'd often watched the little ones in the Palermo Aquarium. They'll lay hold of something new to them, and paw it over deliberately by the hour, squeezing and pulling it, and never letting go for a minute.

"All this came back to me, and I could judge the size of the squid that had got hold of me by the length of its arms. Its eyes told its bulk, too ; for when I'd got my strength again, and my struggling began to turn its curiosity into anger, they came out phosphorescent in the darkness. They were hideous enough danger-signals, and as I wrenched and heaved they lighted up uglier and uglier. For all I could do the grip on me only tightened.

"But it wasn't the tightness of the grip that was sending the crawling shudders through me ; it was the kind of grip it was. For the suckers—and there were two rows of them on every arm—began to 'set' and 'draw.' They glued themselves to me all over, but I felt their mouthing worst on my bare hands and wrists.

"Sometimes I would get hold of the end of an arm, and twist it off me ; but it only gave and stretched like the elastic it was. I knew that as soon as I had to relax the tension it would spring back again. And every minute or two the brute spat its sepia ; I could smell it even through my rubber suit. I fought and yelled like a crazy man, for my nerves had

gone ; but the thick 'hough ! hough !' the beast makes when its blood is up was all the answer and heed it gave me.

"Yet in that first terror it hadn't rightly come over me what my real danger was. It was only when I had struggled and screamed myself tired and had gasping leisure for clear thinking that I realised what the end of it was likely to be. My first thought was that, after all, I couldn't be choked to death nor my air supply cut off, and it would only be a matter of time till I and the brute would be hauled up together.

Then of a sudden my mind went back to the aquarium again, and I remembered that whenever the little squids in it caught a fish, or anything else soft enough, they never failed to finish handling it by pushing out that chisel-edged, parrot-beak of theirs, and ripping it up just as a child might an old rag doll. Its head had only to let go whatever it was holding to in the galley, the beak had only to reach the breast of my suit or even to slit up one of my sleeves to drown me as sure as if there weren't a diving-pump within a thousand miles of Palermo.

"I think I went into a kind of delirium then, filling my helmet full of senseless screeching till it rang like a Chinese gong, jerking and writhing in the brute's arms, and flinging my head back and forward in the crazy hope of sending back a signal that way ; but I had too much slack, and I knew they'd probably not heed it, anyway.

"All the time the suckers were drawing steadily stronger ; from the first nip and sting, I felt now a long, burning ache. One arm was coiling itself more and more around my neck ; I could hear it rub squeaking about my copper collar, and as it tightened I knew it was bringing the head gradually closer.

"The sepia was now as vile as two-year bilge. As I foamed and fought, the eyes stood out like great opals with candles behind them, and the lights in them turned crueller and crueller at every heave I gave. I couldn't think or pray. I could only rave at the Italians up above for letting me be done to death like this.

"Suddenly I felt the hose and line growing taut. The next

minute I was off my feet, and there was a terrific tug as the squid's anchorage in the galley was broken. But we were lifted steadily up, he still gripping to me, and so in one big clump we came to the hatchway. He tried to get a purchase on it as we squeezed through, but he didn't. I was in luck that he had such other things to think of, for they kept his beak off me.

"No, I didn't end up by fainting or anything like that. When they'd unscrewed my face-plate, I just sat on the side of the mole and did a little laughing and crying both at once. I can remember yet the outlandish sounds I made ; it was for all the world like the squawking of an old rooster when you've laid his poor neck across the chopping-block.

"It was two days before I could key myself up to putting the armour on again. Even then you could still see the red marks all over my hands and wrists ; you can make them for yourself by touching your skin with a pneumatic nozzle for a second, or even by sucking hard with your lips.

"My tenders said they had hauled me up because they'd felt a queer, steady pulling on the hose. Probably the brute had got hold of it with one of its arms, and had reefed in the slack to see what it was ; its curiosity may have been my salvation after all. However, my gang took all the credit for it, and they prepared to boil and eat two of *Signor Pulpu's* legs by way of celebrating the event. But first they put him whole on the scales. He weighed only seventy-nine pounds—but, as the celebration showed, it was all pretty solid muscle.

"That feast petered out before it was really well started. Even 'fore-the-mast jaws couldn't manage it ; they cast anchor in the first chop. As for me, that was no great disappointment, for I'd been content to look on. Somehow, I still felt stand-offish toward that squid."

III.—A DEEP-SEA SERMON.

It was a bright, sunshiny afternoon, and the old diver was sitting dangling his heels over the end of the wharf. He had been serenely silent for some time, when a boat-load of young men pulled by, singing and shouting in maudlin fashion. One of them noticed him, and shouted, "Have a drink, old hoss !"

The philosopher of the under-sea sniffed with as much irritation as his equable nature could display, and he muttered, half to himself, "You'll get your drink, young man, if you and your friends are not more careful with that dingey—and it will be a longer drink than you're reckoning on, too !"

He followed the boat with frowning eyes until it disappeared behind the long dock. Then he again broke silence :

"A man can't drink and get far, diving. There may be businesses where the chap who takes more than is good for him is just the sort they're looking for, although I haven't yet happened on any such myself. The big bankers and railroad presidents and steamship-owners, for all I know, may feel like putting up notices in their offices :

" 'If you want to succeed with us, take a day off once a week and get drunk !' Maybe they feel that way about it, and maybe they don't. But I know just this : you can't drink and dive.

"They say marrying always finds out the weakest side of a man, and the same is true of the deep sea. A pressure of twenty or twenty-five pounds, let alone one of fifty or sixty, goes feeling over a man like an insurance doctor ; and sure as death it'll put its finger on that link in the chain of his make-up that's going to be the first to break—and often enough it'll break it, too.

"If you haven't a sound heart and lungs, if you've been sunstruck or have had your brain affected in any other way, you can't go down safely. But above all,—both for his own sake, and for the sake of his fellow divers, too,—a drinker can't afford to try it—and for a lot of good reasons.

"I don't need to say anything of the plain likelihood of a muddle-headed man getting his valves out of kilter, or giving the wrong signals, or tangling himself in his lines and hoisting tackle. But take the matter of the effect of pressure alone. Deep water acts on a good many of the clearest-headed men exactly like laughing-gas, and when a man's brain is afume with spirits to begin with, it makes a fool of him in no time.

"Whatever state of mind he's in is exaggerated tenfold ; and whether he almost laughs his head off or wants to do murder is only a matter of how much he's been drinking, and accordingly how he's feeling when he goes down. If he's in an ugly temper to start with, the fact that he's soon making a fool of himself under sea—circling round a mast till he's tied himself like a calf to a tree, or going down one hatch and trying to come up another, or getting hooked to his own derrick cable and being pulled up like a cork on a fishing-line—isn't going to make him any pleasanter to work with.

"Most likely before he's through with his spree he'll go clean blood-mad and run amuck on his diving partners. That's what happened with me once, and I was as near done for as I want to be. If I've been giving you a temperance lecture, I've good personal reasons for it.

"The man's name was Feally, and he was a big, swarthy giant of a fellow, hailing from Baltimore, I think. The job we met on was a simple enough one, getting the cargo out of a Sound schooner that had foundered in five or six fathoms ; and the boss had left Feally and me to work ahead with no one above but our tenders, the derrick-hands, and the engineer.

"Well, I don't know how he got it, but the second day after we were left alone Feally showed that he had liquor with him. Now if it was any one's business to speak to him, it was mine, for I was senior in the gang. But when a man's working alongside of you and drawing pretty near the same pay, you don't feel like venturing to stand him up against a mast and preach him sermons ; so I didn't say anything.

"Besides, when we were up on the tug, there was really nothing to betray him but his breath. I found it awkward

to say to him, 'Feally, you've been drinking, for when I get close enough to you I can smell it.' I'd have seemed to him like the worst sort of meddler.

"But once we were down—oh, there wasn't any need to get close to him for evidence then! For the pressure, even at five fathoms, just brought it out all over. For the first few days, when he wasn't taking much, it only made him funny. He wanted to liven things up by larking. He'd keep trying to trip me, or he'd hit me a whack on the top of the helmet every chance he got, or try to leap-frog over me, or play pranks with my lines. I could fancy I heard his silly laugh at every lunny trick.

"As for his work, his hoisting cable wasn't half 'fed.' He didn't send up one case to my two. But the derrick men, even if it had been their business to concern themselves about it, couldn't know that he wasn't doing what he ought to. For when you're lifting out a cargo, sometimes it will take you as long a time over one case as it will over the next ten. So Feally went on his way pretty much untroubled.

"But one day, though, about the end of the week, I thought the end of his work on that job had come, for without any warning one afternoon the boss came out to us. Feally had just been hauled up, and by rights needed an hour's rest; but his tenders, who were really kind-hearted chaps, seeing that he was a good deal worse than usual that day, were nervous lest the boss should notice the state he was in if he stayed up above; and crowding him back into his suit, they sent him down again as quick as they could.

"I wondered at his returning from his 'off spell' so soon, and particularly because he wasn't funny any longer. He kept fumbling at the hook of his cable—he was past being able to do anything for himself—and looking at me kind of appealing. But as I knew that he was drunk, and knew that he was well aware of it, too, I didn't feel called upon to go out of my way any on his behalf.

"But when, after an hour or so, I went up for my own rest spell and found the boss there, that opened my eyes.

And furthermore, when the boss remarked that Feally seemed to be having a difficult grip to make and needed help, I answered up—pretty ambiguous, I own—that he did need help, and I was going back to give it to him right away. The boss would have given him his time in a minute if he'd found out he'd been drinking; and except for that, Feally wasn't such a bad sort.

"So I got back down to him the quickest I knew how, and for the next hour I did his work as well as my own. I made fast his tackle, gave his signals and all, and it kept me busy. But I couldn't do anything else, for he didn't seem to have either sense or strength in him—only stumbled about and got in my way.

"Fortunately, when we had to come up at last,—and we were both well-tuckered by the long siege we'd had of it,—the boss was gone. He'd made remarks to the derrick-hands about our slowness, though, and that made me mad, for I had a fairly good conscience in the business. I turned loose on Feally, and told him if he touched liquor again that trip one of us would quit the job, and I didn't intend it should be me.

"He was humble enough, and promised all sorts of reform—was going to take the pledge as soon as he got on shore, and what not besides. He kept to it for about a week, and then there came a day that put an end to his diving career in that neighbourhood, and almost finished mine for good!

"I don't know why I was fool enough to go down with him that afternoon. Any one could see that he'd been making up for the week he'd gone dry. His tenders certainly were not slow to notice it; but being an easy-going, irresponsible lot, they took it only as a better joke than usual, and made all sorts of fun of him. 'Would he take his pipe with him?' 'Did he want his air-hose screwed on, or would he go without?' 'And—as we were taking down hammer and nails to do some bracing between decks—hadn't he better carry the nails in his mouth, and take the hammer to break his face-plate when he wanted to use them?' He made no answer to

any of their nonsense, only shuffled his feet and looked sullen and ugly; but what they said stuck in his mind, as you'll see later.

"I went down first, and a few minutes afterward I saw his legs coming through the hatch. Half-way to the bottom he slipped and went plunging down on the lumber we'd piled there. But the tumble sobered him so little that he put his hand up to his helmet to feel for the bump! Although I was angry with him, I couldn't help grinning at that; and when, after two or three tries, he got to his feet again and started to drive nails, I burst into a roar in spite of myself.

"You see, the way light is slanted in the water keeps things below the surface from being where they really ought to be; it's so hard to get any proper force with the hammer that in ordinary simple fairness the nails ought to act straight and right, but they don't. An old diver, though, uses his hammer by instinct. He can nail as well with his eyes shut as open. Consciously or unconsciously, he makes his calculation with every blow.

"But with the liquor in, all Feally's instinct for nail-driving was well out; and when he'd made three wide misses,—he stood directly in the hatchway light, and I could see him plainly,—and had got wrathier and wrathier at every whack, the fourth time he made a full arm swing, like a crazy man with a sledge, and smashed his left-hand fingers flatter than a rivet-head.

"I stopped laughing right then, and started over to see if I could help him any. Well, he just caught up his hammer again, and gave it to me with all his strength square on my head-piece.

"For one dazed jiffy I thought he'd gashed my helmet, but he hadn't. Bruising my shoulders along the line of the collar was all the harm he'd done; and as soon as I was sure of that, I took hold of him, pressed my face-plate close to his,—which is the only way divers can make each other hear,—and told him he'd better get out of water till his hand was fixed and he was sobered up.

"For answer he grabbed me about the body, and swore he'd go up in his own good time, and before he went he was going to do for me. The whisky inside him and the pressure outside, to treble the effect of it, were working with a vengeance ; he was a long way past the funny stage now.

"I shouted back at him not to be a drunken idiot, and tried to wrench myself free. But he had twice my strength and held me easily. We wrestled and strained for a good five minutes. From being only exasperated, I began to be nervous and anxious ; and I own it was soon worse than that with me.

"The 'tween decks of a foundered ship is a gloomy enough place at best, and fighting a madman didn't add to its cheerfulness. And Feally, as he gradually worked himself into a frenzy, made it worse by shoving his helmet against mine every few minutes, and yelling that I'd see whose face-plate would be smashed with the hammer and whose mouth would be filled with nails. His voice came to me roaring and bellowing like a wild beast's, and his face glared through his glass open-mouthed and distorted.

"I hadn't long to wait to see that he was in deadly earnest about smashing my plate, for as soon as he had his right arm free for a minute, he struck at me again. The blow went high an inch or two, or my suit would have been full of water in twenty seconds.

"I made a desperate twist and clutched for the life-line. But dropping the hammer, he had me by the wrist with one sweep, and pinned my arm by my side again. And indeed as our tenders had known we'd be circulating around considerable, and had given us yards of slack, to draw the line taut and signal in the same second would have been impossible, anyway.

"For a minute we stood there at a deadlock, both of us breathing hard, and I tightening my muscles and wondering what his next crazy move would be. I found out almost before I could think what he was at. His grip dropped from my waist to my legs, and in a trice he'd lifted me off my

balance. I had just presence of mind enough to fling my arms up around my face as I went down.

"I knew what was coming then. What he couldn't do with the hammer he was going to try to do with his lead-soled boots. And in spite of the resistance of the water, and the difficulty he had in keeping himself balanced, his kicks were brutally hard ones.

"Every time my wrists were struck I thought the bones were broken in a new place; but some way or other I kept my face-plate covered, and flattened myself on the floor.

"After his fifth or sixth try had come to nothing he stopped. I thought that perhaps the madness was beginning to work itself out. Instead of that, it was only making him slyer and more calculating, for, suddenly bending over, he tried to hold my arms down and use his boot while my glass had no protection. But he couldn't stoop and kick at the same time, and after a stubborn struggle, he stopped once more and drew off.

"Although I was in mortal fear lest he'd think of the knife I had under my belt,—it was my salvation that he didn't carry one himself,—I dared to hope again, and peered out from under my hands. He was giving my slack a turn around the nearest stanchion!

"I think the cool deliberation of the brute maddened me. Anyway, as he came back, I let all caution go, and flung my arms around his ankles. It was the wisest thing I could have done, for it took him unawares, and I had the purchase of the under man, too. Using all the shoulder strength I had, I shot him head-first over my back. In the water a diver weighs only a few pounds. He went easily, and he went a long way.

"I snatched at my line—fortunately for me its thickness had kept it from drawing too tight about the stanchion—and started up the ladder. But I no more than had my head out of the hatch than I felt Feally's grip on my hose again.

"I had only a moment to think, but the first thought to come was the right one. I was already pretty full of air, and if free

from my eighty pounds of leaded belt I'd go to the top like a bubble. I braced my back against the hatchway and tore at the belt buckle; my knife I whipped loose as the weights dropped from me.

"In a jiffy I was half upside down, and pulling at Feally like a balloon. Then I took the risk, a diver's last resort, and slashed at the hose. The cut went through clean. I closed my thumb over the end in the same second, and in one big rush of bubbles went straight up.

"Two minutes later my tenders were unscrewing my face-plate. I told them between gasps to haul up Feally, and then lay back completely played.

"Feally left that day. He didn't give any reasons; and as for me, I didn't go into any unnecessary explanations. He came to his end finally when diving in Port Elizabeth; and although it was hushed up, enough leaked out to tell what had been his undoing. Well, it's every man's privilege to follow his own theories of what's wise and what's foolish. But this is a long way past being a theory: You can't mix drink and the 'under sea.'"

IV.—UNDER-SEA SHARKING.

THE old diver was putting a rubber patch on one of his son's suits.

"It ain't what you could call a right handsome piece of tailoring, is it?" he said. "The waist's just a trifle too much like a sea-cow's, and as for the trousers, an elephant's ain't much baggier. I don't wonder that when a man gets into clothing like this, and then crowns it with a head-piece like a wall-eyed lookout lamp, a shark never takes him for anything human and eatable.

"No, a shark won't touch a man 'in armour.' And they're not so mighty fierce after human flesh *out* of it. On a 'black' coast the natives'll tell you they can run the surf and dive for coins without much danger because 'sea-tigers' hardly

ever touch any but white men ; and almost all whites in shark waters have a firm belief that ' dark meat ' is the only sort the brutes care about.

" As for their cruelty,—though I've got a shuddering, vivid recollection of the fury of one of them when wounded,—I don't believe much in that, either. When they make a kill they tear it to pieces and down it the quickest they can, which isn't more brutal than nature. Indeed, what's made me sick a hundred times has been the cruelty of sailors and fishermen toward *them*. I like fish in a pan just a little better than I like them in the water. But it's a worse animal than I've ever run across that deserves torture. And sea-beasts are as a rule the most harmless, easy-going, good-natured tribe imaginable.

" My only adventure with a shark was in the spring when I hired with a regular wrecking company, and had my first job south of Cuba. That was the raising of the famous *Georgia Belle*, which was about the unluckiest and costliest yacht that ever kept a millionaire from worrying lest he'd die rich.

" On this occasion she'd run on one of those saw-tooth reefs off Cayo Largo in Jardinillos ; and after giving her owner and his friends just time enough to get away in the boats, she'd backed off and took to the bottom, first bow and then stern. When I climbed down to look at her, I found thirty feet of her forward sheathing from keel to cutwater riddled and torn like a biscuit-tin target. And the first part of my job was to sling myself over her side, like a house-painter from a roof, and put a ' sticking-plaster ' of concrete and canvas over every one of those thousand odd holes. It was a month's contract, and promised to be a mighty tedious one, too.

" But up above we had considerable diversion. Not only were there the crews of the tug, the derrick and supply-boat, but there was a Batabano sponging-sloop taking off the reef, and her officers used to come over evenings and entertain us with music. They had only a cranky mouth-organ and a broken guitar ; but we all used to join in the choruses.

" Whether it was the racket or the refuse from the cook's galley, we brought ourselves a visitor. The third day I was

down, a heavy shadow suddenly swung over my head. At first I thought the tug had warped round ; but when I looked up I saw a fish that seemed as big as a torpedo-boat. It hung above me there in the under-sea twilight, slowly furling and unfurling its tail like a propeller standing up against a tideway.

"I knew what it was. My whole inner machinery seemed to stop short, my blood went cold and heavy as mercury, and I clutched at my sling cables to keep myself from falling. What I'd heard of a man in armour being safe from sharks went out of my head like the bubbles from my helmet ; and when at last the ' sea-tiger ' slewed around, and slid quietly off through the black-blue wall of ocean behind me, I caught at the signal-line as if I were drowning.

"Up on the tug, though, they only thought it was a great joke. They had seen the man-eater ! The mate said he seemed to him 'about the length of the *Great Eastern*, and the mouth on him looked like a church door hung with icicles.' Tivey, the engineer, declared it was true that sharks had the power of throwing off electricity, for at first it was as if they had a galvanised jumping-jack at the end of the life-line.

"It ended with my going down again, looking silly, and feeling mighty quaky about the middle. But I wasn't troubled again that day.

"Yet next morning the shark was around, and off and on through that week. He was always alone. It was the small fish, though, that always gave me the first warning. As I scraped at the *Belle's* sheathing, a dozen or more little ' gropers ' were all the time at my elbows on the watch for broken shell-fish and barnacles, like chickens after worms when you're spading a garden ; and all of a sudden they'd whip away, and next moment the shadow would swoop in over me. I'd work myself around sidewise on the slings, turning slow as the hands of a clock for fear he'd notice me,—though I knew his eyes were placed so he could only see level and upward,—and then I'd grip myself tight and watch him through the ghost sunlight.

"Yet for all my fright, I couldn't help being fairly fascinated

by the way he handled himself. No fish seen from under water seems able to make an ungraceful move, and that great eighteen-footer threw off curves like a show penman doing decorative birds. I suppose it's because a shark has a kind of elastic cartilage instead of bone, but I know no eel was ever freer in its motions. And he could turn, not only in his own length, but as if on a pivot, though how in nature he could do it with nothing but fins and tail beat me.

"But the times when he came in behind me or dropped down from the surface to see me working—those were minutes when the only feeling I had was cold, sick dread. He would hang there, his nose almost under my arm or over my shoulder,—I could feel the water move with him he was so close,—and look on like a big dog watching a man whitewash a fence.

"He wasn't ugly or threatening, merely interested in a lazy, casual sort of way. But while he was there I never moved, even to turn my head. And when he came in slantwise from above, and I caught a glimpse of his great blunt muzzle and crescent jaws, ragged with arrow-head teeth, I would make one gasping vow that if I got up safely no money would ever get me down again.

"But once out of water and on the tug among the men, I hadn't the spunk to speak. Two words to the boss and he'd have had the shark put out of business in no time, some way or other. Not one diver in twenty has his right courage under water, but I was too young to acknowledge that then. I pretended that I'd got used to my visitor—indeed, that I was rather interested in watching him.

"I don't suppose I fooled them much. Tivey, the engineer, seemed to guess the truth of the matter, anyway, and with an old man's delight in picking on a younger one, he did what he could to add to my misery. He'd throw out his greasy waste whenever the brute came round, by way of keeping it from deserting. And sometimes when I was up, he'd pitch it a piece of pork nailed to a barrel-stave. Its jaws would clash on it like a bear-trap, and the old fellow would chuckle horribly and say: 'Wait till ye get absent-minded some time down

below, and move your arm too sudden ! You'll find that everything that moves quick is pork to *him* !'

"Then the next time the brute came near me I would sit all hunched together, and as I felt him nose me, now this side, now that, I quaked as if from a spurt of icy water. Once he brushed me with his elephant's ear of a forward fin and rolled his great girth against me as he turned. I stiffened out with a jerk that almost spilled me off the slings.

"Well, that sort of thing couldn't go on, and it didn't, but the end of it came from a direction and with a suddenness I hadn't had any hope of. As you may know, a good many Key West spongers, when regular business is slack, do a little 'tiger-killing.' For a shark's about half liver, and it tries out gallons to a cod's gills, though of course the quality's inferior. Now it seemed the Batabano people were in the habit of doing some occasional sharking, too.

"One night, when we'd been singing, their captain turned to me and asked if I wanted some 'fon-a?' I said I did. What did he do then but offer me the use of his harpoon and line and two dollars for my time if I'd get him my man-eater ! I accepted the offer quickly enough, and the other men were keen for the sport.

"Early the next morning the spongers brought over their line. There was a hundred fathoms of it, with a six-foot snood of steel chain and a regular old-time blubber-spade of a harpoon. The men rigged the small windlass for a reel, and I had them set it well up in the bow, figuring to avoid fouled lines. Then I put on extra weight, for my idea after making my strike was to drop from the slings like a plump, and then lie low on bottom. I started down in a sort of joyous excitement.

"I hadn't much more than laid the iron down beside me and got to work when my groper 'chickens' melted out of sight. I felt the water push against my back, and I knew the brute was once more behind me.

"I turned, but gradually as a jack-screw. His great torpedo-shaped head hung well within reach. If I could get him through that pulpy mackerel crown ! But he suddenly drew

back. I saw I would have to do some shadow-catching. The excitement made me cool. He hove to, and began to throw his lazy curves about me. That gave me broadside chances, but I wouldn't take them. Then, seemingly without the slightest fear, he turned and came straight in on me.

"I threw up the iron. His vicious bottle-green eyes caught the quick movement with one hungry flash, and the next moment the huge curve of muddy white was whirling over me!

"I struck wildly just below the spreading reef of jaws, and threw myself off the slings with an unnerved yell of terror that roared and boomed about my helmet as I went the twenty feet to bottom. There I flattened myself beside a big firkin-like 'loggerhead' sponge, and lay gasping.

"The Nantucket sharking boats are not only built solid as ice-crushers, but are covered with heavy steel-wire meshing as well. For even the six and eight-foot 'wolves' they go after will often turn when struck and try to tear the little craft to pieces in their fury. If I'd known that then, I'd have eaten and slept with all the 'tigers' in the Caribbean before I tried any under-sea harpooning.

"I could feel something sawing and chopping at my hose and line, and fear alone forced me to turn over and see what it was. The water above me was in one swirling draw and surge, like the double maelstrom whirl from the screws of an ocean steamer; but there was little sand to rise from bottom, and I could take in the situation with horrible clearness.

"I had simply set the brute mad with rage, and not having me to vent it on, he had flung himself at the slings. The hanging stage was already jerking about in ragged splinters, and as he leaped and twisted and doubled, his jaws caught and gnashed it through again and again. Then he threw himself against the side of the *Belle*, ripping and striking and pitching about like twenty rabid panthers. When he let his tail go, it was like a bunch of elastic thick as a tree loosed off at full stretch. He struck faster than a thrasher can use a flail.

"I hope I may never again have such feelings as I had during those minutes. It seemed nothing but a choice of

deaths. At any moment he might see me hiding, yet if I slipped my weights and tried a rush for the top he would surely pounce on me. If he got his line round mine, or if my air-hose once fell across his teeth, an oat-straw couldn't be shorn through by mower-knives any more easily. I lay and waited.

"When he tired for a minute of lashing out at the *Belle* and the tangled wreck of the slings, he drew off, savagely throwing his head from side to side and snapping his bear-trap jaws at every jerk. Then he started to whirl spindle-wise ; and when he'd spun all the slack about him,—and they shouldn't have let him have a fathom of it,—he suddenly stopped dead, and like a cracking whip, with one plunge flung free again.

"The 'lift' of the water from it almost twisted me from my loggerhead. And then he was back at the slings and tackle again. I lost all sense so completely that I got to talking to myself, like a surgeon to a child.

"I found out later that my tenders sent down one signal after another ; I never took the first of them. Again and again the shark came back, and when he was still for a moment I felt he was looking for me ; and with the terror of it my breath came sucking in through my teeth like a whiffing safety-valve.

"It ended as suddenly as it began. In one of his doublings the brute got his tail round the harpoon line, exactly as a sailor kinks his leg round a-rope he's sliding down. And when, the next moment, he stiffened out again with the rebound of a sprung bow, the iron came away like a tooth on a string. Probably it had done no serious harm to the shark.

"For a moment he hung there, vicious and uncertain, and then sullenly moved away through the shadow and out to sea. I never saw him again.

"The colour of my hair didn't do any lightning-changing in that quarter of an hour ; they pulled me up as red-headed as ever. But I reckon, none the less, that I got considerably older in wisdom. Since then, when I've been scared, I've generally been honest enough to own it, and when I've felt that I really had to go looking for trouble—well, I've always had better sense than to seek it with a harpoon in the under-sea."

A COAST ON THE BIG SMOKY.

BY FRANK L. POLLOCK.

FROM Asheville, North Carolina, a short branch of railroad runs west to the Tennessee border, and where it crosses the range of the Big Smoky Mountains are to be found some of the steepest and sharpest grades and curves that American engineering can show.

A little beyond Valentine the line zigzags up a mountainside, taking nearly fifteen miles of track to cover perhaps one-fifth of the distance. It is a bad place for the hauling of heavy freight; for much of the way the road-bed is blasted out or built up on the sheer mountainside, so that it overhangs bare bluffs and wooded slopes where the pines seem to grow out of one another's tops; and the grade is such that no train is handled by less than two engines.

On the shoulder of the mountain it becomes easier, however; for a mile or two it is almost level where the track makes a wide circle around the mountain; then it grows steep again, and here stands a little sawmill, with a short siding for convenience in loading cars.

Very early on a July morning some years ago a freight-train left an empty flat car on this siding, and at eight o'clock it was half-loaded with walnut planks for Asheville. The brakes were not set, it would appear, but the car was blocked by strips of scantling under the wheels. How these became displaced it is impossible to say; perhaps they were struck by the hoofs of the mules engaged in hauling the lumber; perhaps they were loosely placed, and the increasing weight of the car gradually pushed them out of position.

At any rate, the car suddenly slid off very softly, and began to roll down the sliding toward the switch.

No one happened to notice the escape of the car till it had made some twenty or thirty yards, and then the men had no time to overtake and stop it before it should reach the end of the siding. The switch was supposed to be set for the main line, for the west-bound passenger-train was due to pass in fifteen minutes, and the men at the mill watched the slowly moving car in disgust, expecting to see it go off the track at the open rail-ends.

It might fall upon its side, requiring a locomotive to haul it into place again ; in any case, there would be hours of labour in jacking it upon the rails. But to every one's amazement and horror, it struck the switch with a rattle and clank, went through and moved out upon the main line, still slowly but with increasing speed.

There is no station or telegraph office at this point. The seldom-used switch is manipulated by the trainmen, and it had evidently been left open with criminal carelessness by the crew of the freight-train that had passed four hours earlier. The passenger-train should already have left Valentine, the next station below, and there was no possibility of warning it.

On those steep grades the wild car would attain a speed of a hundred miles an hour before it had gone far ; it would crash into the train like a bolt from a catapult ; and collision and derailment on those mountain curves are the equivalent of a high bridge disaster, in level country.

As has been said, the grade was extremely slight for a mile or two, and the car appeared to be moving so slowly that there seemed a possibility of overtaking it, boarding it and setting the brakes. With this idea, half a dozen men started frantically in pursuit. But the runaway had a long start, and its apparently slow motion was deceptive ; it was really travelling even now much faster than a man could run. One after another the heavy-booted mountaineers fell out of the race, panting and breathless. A few still kept on running, but hopelessly, for the car had gained a lead of more than three hundred yards,

which it was impossible to reduce. Then suddenly a shout sounded behind these struggling runners, and as they leaped off the track a hand-car shot past, with a single youthful figure pumping energetically on the handles.

A little beyond the sawmill the section gang had been at work, their hand-car standing on the siding. Cleve McGrath, the eighteen-year-old son of the "boss," had just gone to the car for more spikes, when he saw the start of the runaway. Like every one else, he watched for its derailment at the switch ; as it held the line, he watched the vain pursuit on foot.

Then he knocked away the blocks from the wheels of the hand-car and jumped aboard, throwing all his weight on the handles of the propelling gear. Faint as the slope was, it greatly facilitated propulsion. He rattled over the switch, and in a quarter of a minute had overtaken the men, who gave him a cheer as he darted past. The flat car had passed out of sight around a curve, and was now nearly a quarter of a mile ahead.

It was his plan to overtake the wild car, board it, and stop it by putting down the brakes. Of course the disconnected air-brakes could not be used, but the hand-brakes were still available, and should be sufficient to bring it to a standstill.

But it was absolutely necessary to overtake the car before it should strike the steeper grade a little farther down the line ; once on the rapid slope, its tremendous momentum would cause it to leave the light hand-car as if the latter were motionless. At present he was gaining fast, but he had almost reached the limit of his speed, while that of the heavier car was continually increasing.

Cleve bent with all his might over the handles. The hand-car seemed to be moving faster than ever hand-car moved before. The regular and elastic ring of the wheels on the rails rose to a shrill cry, continually blending with the resonant tingle that trailed behind the runaway car. The crank-handles oscillated so swiftly that the boy could not apply his full strength, and could do little more than follow them up and down with his arms.

As he swung round a curve he was compelled to hold on hard to avoid being pitched down the mountainside, and the car itself seemed likely to leave the track at any moment. He could not keep the runaway in sight on account of the continual curves, but at every glimpse it appeared much nearer, till, as he doubled a sharp loop, he saw it not forty yards ahead.

Victory was almost within reach, but in a few hundred yards the grade would begin to increase. It was now or never, and the boy pushed madly on the jumping handles. Inch by inch the hand-car drew up, till it bumped its leader. Then, watching his chance, Cleve clutched the brake-rod and swung himself aboard.

His foot slipped and he very nearly went off again, hanging desperately for some moments by his hands before he could recover his balance. The lightened hand-car almost instantly fell behind as the runaway increased its speed and impetus and began to spin down the slope at a rapid rate. Cleve managed to regain his footing, clambered upon the lumber and applied himself to the brake-wheel.

Round it went; the ratchet clacked. The shoes squealed, but there seemed no effect on the still increasing speed. He waited half a minute for the car to slacken, but there was no such effect. The boy's strength was insufficient to set the brakes hard enough, and realising this, he managed to work loose one of the side stakes that held the lumber in place. This he twisted between the spokes of the brake-wheel, and with this leverage he braced his foot against the bottom of the rod and pulled.

With a deafening shriek the steel shoes gripped the wheels, and a long trail of fiery sparks shot out from the tortured metal. The ratchet came up another notch, but there was no perceptible lessening of the now breathless speed. Again Cleve strained his back on the wheel. The rasping cry of the grating steel racked his ears, but it was no use. On that abnormal grade, the hand-brake could not hold against the momentum of the heavy car.

Along the mountainside they darted like a flash. The

speed and pitching of the car had grown terrific. Trees went past in green streaks, and on the other side the cut embankment made a smooth ribbon of brown. Then, with a sickening swing, the car lashed round a curve, and shot out upon a stretch of straight track.

Cleve climbed upon the planks and lay flat for safety's sake, clutching the brake. All his effort had been of no avail, it seemed; he had only contrived to involve himself in the disaster that now appeared inevitable. He could neither stop the car nor leave it, for it would be almost certain death to jump.

The whole fabric groaned and the planks shifted as the car went round another curve. It was hard to take breath in the furious wind that drove against the rushing car. Cleve could hardly hear the screaming of the tightened brakes. As the planks slid, he had a momentary terror that one might slip over the front and derail the car. That fear passed, but it left the idea that the car might even yet be stopped—if it were made to jump the track.

Cleve was only an ordinary mountain boy, with no particular pretensions to heroism, and at first the idea gripped him with cold horror. It was no better than plain suicide. But, after all, the end of his wild ride must be death, when he crashed into the ascending locomotives; and by his single sacrifice the train-load of passengers might be saved. It would be easy to wreck the car. One of those planks dropped upon the rails in front would be more than enough to send the car and its load shooting like a bullet over the mountain edge and into the ravines below.

There was yet a bare chance that no sacrifice of life might be required on either side. If the passenger-train happened to be late, very late, the car might run past the next station without encountering any obstacle, and then out upon the level, where it could be stopped.

This chance would presently be decided. There were several points on the line from which a clear view could be obtained of the track for miles below, almost to the station,

and the nearest of these was about three miles farther on. If the train had started up the mountain, it would be visible.

It was a heroic spirit that drove the boy to prepare for a duty from which every atom of the flesh revolted. He got unsteadily upon his knees, for it was almost impossible to stand upright with no support, and pulled and pried one of the heavy twenty-foot planks till it lay athwart the rest. Then it was easy to push it forward till it lay balanced within a foot of the end of the car. Another shove would send it off and under the wheels; and he sat upon it and stared out over the tree-tops for the sight that would mean life or death.

Cleve has ever since insisted that he acted purely as an automaton; that he had no clear idea of what he was about. But courage is no mushroom growth, and it is these moments of action under blind instinct that determine the stuff of which the man is made.

The situation was enough, indeed, to daze any one's brain. The brakes shrieked discordantly, and the flying car left a trail like a comet, a trail of red-hot sparks mingled with clouds of dust and gravel from the road-bed. It seemed to the boy that he had been aboard for hours. In reality the coast had not lasted for more than ten or twelve minutes, and nearly eight miles of track had been covered.

The telegraph poles went past like palings in a fence, and everything within a hundred yards was a blur of green and brown. A few seconds more, and the point appeared where the mountainside had been swept bare by a landslide, opening an uninterrupted view far below.

The car flashed past this gap in a twinkling, but in that instant Cleve had seen the passenger-train puffing up the grade under a heavy cloud of black smoke. It was about two miles away, as the track ran.

That decided it. At the next curve Cleve thrust his lever under the balanced plank and hesitated—and it is difficult to blame him. But in that momentary delay the car had doubled the elbow, and it was only at a curve that derailment could be effected with absolute certainty. The wreck of the car might

displace the rails, but the chance of that would have to be taken.

Then came another strip of straight track ; on one side a wooded slope of sixty degrees going down five hundred feet, on the other the corresponding ascent. As the car approached the curve at the end of this stretch the boy caught sight of a feather of smoke above the trees, and the whistle sounded appallingly near.

Half a dozen lumbermen were cutting oak timber on the mountain just above, and they saw the end of the ride. The car rushed into their view with shrilly screaming wheels and a trail of dust and sparks, and as it struck the curve Cleve rose to his feet and pried off the plank. As it fell, he turned to jump.

He was a second too late. He had not counted on the lightning speed. There was a splintering crash, the car seemed to trip like a runner, and the air was full of flying planks. Cleve was shot into space like a bullet ; he went over the edge and landed with a smash in the top of a hickory-tree several rods below.

He clutched desperately at the twigs that broke in his fingers ; he could not hold on, and he dropped through the branches like a shot squirrel. He did not even hear the thundering sound with which the car leaped twenty feet from the track into a poplar thicket, and ploughed down the slope with an upheaval of rocks, earth and trees.

The astonished witnesses signalled the train to stop when it came up, a couple of minutes later. The well-spiked rails were not displaced, but a heap of fine walnut splinters lay on the track, planks strewed all the scene, and a broad path of ruin showed where the car had gone. Then the men found Cleve under the tree, completely stunned and with a dislocated shoulder-joint.

While they were picking him up, the abandoned hand-car came charging wildly down the grade and smashed against the pilot of the locomotive. It did considerable damage, and the engineer began to grow nervous at thus being bombarded with

cars of various sizes, and he was glad when the conductor signalled him to go ahead.

After a few miles he began to meet sweating and excited men hurrying down the track to the scene of the expected catastrophe; but the affair was not fully comprehended till the sawmill was reached.

Cleve, who lived close by, was known to all the train crew, and they stopped to put him off at his home. Then the conductor managed to get at the truth by collating the stories of everybody concerned.

When events like this happen in books, the passengers whose lives have been saved invariably make up a purse for the hero and send him to college, but in real life the knowledge that they have been in danger at all is carefully concealed from them. In this case it is probable that no one on board, except the crew, had any clear idea why they had stopped twice that morning where there was no station, and the crew were careful not to communicate any information on the subject.

But when Cleve recovered from his bruises the company took him on as a freight brakeman, as a beginning of the career which he had long ago chosen for himself. He has been promoted to be a passenger brakeman since, and he expects to be a conductor in no great time. If courage and presence of mind count for anything in railroading, it is probable that he will not be disappointed.

ON THE CATHEDRAL ROOF.

BY FRANK L. POLLOCK.

THE front of the cathedral in a city on one of the Great Lakes rises in a square stone tower to a height of fifty, or sixty feet above the ridge of the roof. On the street face of this tower shines a large gilded cross. It is illuminated at night by nine incandescent electric lamps, and a great deal of pride is taken by the parishioners in this decoration.

One night in February, however, the lamps failed to burn and the next morning Willis Carter, a lineman of the Electric Light Company, was sent up the tower ladders to ascertain the reason. Without any great difficulty he found and repaired a break in the circuit and then descended again to the open-arched belfry below. Here he stopped for a moment and leaned from one of the large, unglazed windows to enjoy the view.

He was nearly seventy-five feet above the city, and he could see far out over the green lake.

A hard east wind swept through the belfry with a force that caused the bells to vibrate with a faint humming as they hung.

The window from which Carter leaned overlooked the rear of the cathedral, and was not more than four or five feet above the ridge of the gently-sloping roof. The cold breeze made his position anything but comfortable, and he was about to go down, when an unusually sharp gust whipped the cloth cap from his head and dropped it on the roof below, four or five feet out from the tower and about a yard down the slope.

There seemed no particular difficulty about recovering it,

however ; Carter was used to clambering about giddy heights, and he promptly swung himself out of the window to the roof below. Rain had fallen during the night, mixed with a little sleet, and the slate roof was slippery, although not iced. So he had to sit down astride the roof and hitch himself along slowly till he came opposite the spot where the cap lay.

He leaned over to reach it, but it was a little farther than he had thought ; probably it had been moved again by the wind.

He leaned farther, overbalanced suddenly, tried to throw himself backward—and in the space of a single gasp he found himself on the flat of his back and sliding head foremost down the inclined roof.

The horror of that moment was indescribable.

He expected at every instant to go flying over the edge. It seemed to him that he was moving with terrible speed, and he had a sickening vision of the sharp-pointed iron fence that surrounded the cathedral, on which he would probably fall. He tried to grip the smooth, slated surface of the roof ; there was absolutely nothing to cling to. He could see only the sky, and he shut his eyes, expecting momentarily to feel the roof fall away from underneath.

But after what seemed an incalculable time of agony, the motion stopped. Carter opened his eyes again, and to his astonishment perceived that he had slid not more than three or four yards. The slope of the roof was very gentle,—not more than forty degrees from the horizontal,—and it was this fact alone that had saved him from shooting off to the brick pavements fifty feet below. He had really moved with no great rapidity, in spite of the slippery surface. Now hope returned to his heart. He had shut his eyes, expecting never to open them upon the sky again.

His head swam from his inverted position, and his first thing to do was to shift to a more normal attitude. One has a strange sensation of helplessness in lying with the head lower than the heels. But at the first, faintest movement he made in this attempt his delicate tenure of place was disturbed, and again he began to glide gently down the slippery slates.

In vain he tried to check the fatal motion that was carrying him nearer and nearer to the edge. There was nothing whatever to grasp at; not so much as a nail-head. Even where a slate was cracked or broken he could not work his fingers into the tiny crevices. But after sliding six or eight feet he came to a stop again, and again lay motionless.

This time he was careful to lie absolutely still, hardly daring to breathe, and he thought hard. He must, he reflected, be half-way to the edge by this time. It was highly improbable that any one would notice his predicament from below; the neighbourhood was a quiet, residential one, and there were few people about the streets that day. "And they'll be keeping their heads down against the wind instead of looking up into the air," he thought ruefully. The wind would drown his voice, too; but indeed he dared not attempt to shout, lest the movement of his chest should start him moving again.

As the blood flowed into his head a strange giddiness attacked him. The stone tower rising high into the windy atmosphere was all of earth he could see, and it appeared to reel and swing before his eyes. It seemed to him that he was hanging over the vast depth of the sky, in peril of falling into its unfathomable depths. His brain seemed to grow clogged, his eyes full of blood, and as he stared upward the grey clouds turned crimson.

He greatly feared that he would become unconscious, and would make some involuntary movement while in that state that would carry him over the brink. Probably this would indeed have happened, but for his salvation a violent bleeding at the nose suddenly attacked him, covering his face and hair with blood, but affording instant relief to his brain.

Lucid vision returned at once. It looked a long way now to the top of the roof. He could hear the loud singing of the telephone-wires on the street, and it sounded as if it were just below his ears. But he thought that if he could only turn about to lie on his face with head upward, he might contrive to work his way back to the ridge, after all. It was

the violently unnatural position of his body that disabled him. But there was no sort of fulcrum to support him in turning, and he did not dare to risk any more violent effort. He was too near the edge.

He stretched both arms cautiously to the right and tried to roll over, but before he could change his position in the least the effort had started him sliding as before. This slide lasted longer than either of the others; so long that he made sure of the fatal end at every moment, and completely lost hope. But the roof seemed to prolong itself interminably; it was almost with a shock of surprise that he found himself stopped at last before reaching the eaves.

But another slide would certainly be the last, and warned by the result of his former attempts, he made no more experiments. The wind was bitterly cold; it was freezing, and the idea occurred to him of lying quite still until his clothing should freeze to the wet roof. Of course he might be frozen himself before that time, or more likely the abnormal posture would deprive him of his senses. But he could think of no other plan.

All this time he had not once thought of his belt of tools—in after recollection he could never comprehend why. Like every lineman, he wore a stout leather belt in which were stuck several pairs of pliers of different sizes, a screw-driver, a wrench and a wire-cutter. He recollected these when the screw-driver shifted its position so that its handle made an unpleasant lump under his back.

One of the slates within easy reach had flaked, leaving a narrow crevice underneath. He had noticed it before with the microscopical observation that comes to a man in desperate peril, and had wished vainly for the claws of a cat, in default of the wings of a bird. And now he had them, after all—or their equivalents. He glued himself as closely as possible to the surface of the roof, and with infinite precaution drew the smallest pair of pliers from his belt. It was thin in the jaws, and he inserted it as far as possible into the crack under the slate and gripped hard.

It was fulcrum enough, and he contrived to wriggle round, first to a horizontal, then to a normal head-upward position, supporting himself by the pliers, and in deadly terror lest the slate should break away under the steel. But it held, and the flood of joy that rushed over him when the attempt proved successful told him how far he had fallen into despair. The change of attitude let him down a little lower at first, and as his feet came round they rattled on some metallic substance. He craned his neck, and a single glance was enough. His feet touched the tin gutter-pipes at the edge of the roof.

But now trouble seemed nearly over. He got out another pair of pliers and secured another hold on a similarly chipped slate a yard higher. The roof was old, and slightly defective spots were numerous. Where he could not find one he boldly hammered at the surface till it broke, holding on by the other hand, and so, little by little and very slowly, he worked his way up.

It was not all success, however, for there was one terrible moment when the slate crumbled under his hold, and he slipped back half the distance he had so laboriously achieved. It took him more than half an hour to make the ascent, but at last, shaken and exhausted, he drew himself up on the ridge of the roof.

The rest was easy, and in a few moments he was in the tower. Here such deathly weakness and sickness came over him that he was obliged to lie down on the belfry floor for ten minutes before he dared attempt the long ladders leading down through the tower. Finally he contrived to make the descent dizzily, and came out of the side door of the cathedral to the street—a striking sight, with his face and hair plastered with dried blood; but he did not know it. He had not taken three steps on the sidewalk when he noticed something black at his feet and stooped mechanically to pick it up. It was his cap!

BREAKING THE JAM AT MAD TOM'S GORGE.

BY RAYMOND S. SPEARS.

THE spring drive of logs down the West Canadian Creek, an Adirondack stream, a few years ago, was remarkable for a number of unusual events. To begin with, it was larger by millions of feet than any ever before floated down the stream. It was floated in record time, too, for the snow went off with a rush after the ice had gone out. Consequently the creek was brimming, and on this flood-tide came the logs by the tens of thousands.

To roll stranded logs from the banks and to break the jams, there was a gang of more than sixty strong, daring men. They rode the torrent and fell in a dozen times a week, but at last they learned caution.

Bill Kennedy rode a log into Haskell's Rifts before he knew it one day. A mile of white water full of rocks was before him. Kennedy lost his courage, the more completely because his courage had never before failed him. He uttered a wild cry. Dan Cunningham saw his peril, and jumping to a passing log, pushed out to the rescue. It was a wild race, but the approach of help steadied Kennedy and enabled him to keep his balance. Cunningham, guiding his log into the swiftest current, overtook the helpless raftsmen, and with his pike-pole steered both logs for shore.

There was an eddy just a little way below, and Cunningham, with all his might, shoved Kennedy's log into it. But that thrust pushed his own far out, rolling and rocking. Kennedy was ashore in a moment, but before Cunningham could

recover his balance the log he rode hit a rock ; one end flew up, and the rescuer was thrown twenty feet into the air. He came down head first on a froth-covered rock and disappeared. It was dark before the body was recovered. After that the men took the long way round, even at dinner-time.

No man is a raftsman unless he can ride a log. So, in a lumbering country, every riverside boy of ambition learns the knack on creek still waters. It is a good thing to know how to do. It means a good job when one grows up, and may be the saving of a life besides.

Among the rest of the boys at Wilmurt, Will Conway, sixteen years old that spring, was renowned. He knew the creek, the places where the deer crossed it, the brooks that the minks followed and the pools the trout lurked in. But he wasn't satisfied with the money he earned selling trout and trapping mink. He wanted to make daily wages like a man. So he went to George Koch, the boss driver, and asked to go with his gang ; but Koch told the lad he wasn't big enough yet to handle a cant-hook.

It was a heavy disappointment to Will. It hurt his pride ; besides, the family needed the money. But as argument was of no avail, Will was a mere spectator on the bank just above Mad Tom's Gorge when the driving crew arrived there on a Saturday morning.

That was the best place on the creek to see the drive. A big boulder had come out of the deep water above the gorge and lodged there in midstream at the brink of the tumult, its broad, ugly head two feet above the surface level. Against it logs were hanging every minute, making the worst jam of the season. It was already two hundred yards long.

The mere fact that it was a big jam was something, but that was not all. Whoever broke this jam must surely go through the gorge—a third of a mile of the wildest plunging water, where the flood piles up first against one rock ledge, then against the other, and finally glides into the foaming tumble at the head of Mad Tom's pool, in which men have disappeared.

Haskell's Rifts, broad, open and comparatively shallow, had cost Cunningham his life. Here was water tenfold worse. At sight of the jam above it the men hesitated and shook their heads. They ate their lunch of cheese, bread, canned beef and coffee. Some hoped the water would rise and lift the jam over the boulder; they pointed out that the stream was just then rising a bit, for it was higher in the centre than at the sides. At any rate, a little delay would do no harm.

At the head of the jam the water sucked and boiled, with little whirlpools diving into one another. On both sides it raced, wide, black and smooth, gurgling along the edges as it drew bits of ice and sticks under the ends of logs. Where the water was divided and its bed narrowed, the current ran swifter and swifter, till, at the entrance of the gorge, the water was lined and the foam stretched out, and even the bubbles were oblong, slanted back by the wind or whisked off the surface into shining, evanescent threads. Under such conditions,—with the water sucking and boiling,—no man in the crew volunteered to go to the jam. As a matter of business, the boss offered twenty-five dollars to the one who would try.

There never was a log jam that river-drivers wouldn't break sooner or later, no matter how high or rough the water, but in this case the men wanted time to think. And that was a boy's opportunity.

Will Conway's father had been a noted jam-breaker, and men of the crew who knew the boy relieved their uneasy feelings by joking with him a bit.

"Why, Billy," they said, "your dad would have been out there hours ago if he were here. He wa'n't afraid of the gorge. Huh, I should say not! I seen him the time he went through it—the only one as ever did it alive, I reckon, though some say they have. Them days they used to break jams with a cant-hook and axe, 'stead of dynamite. There was a jam just like this one. You'd ought to have seen it, the way he rode the first log, stiddy as a waggon, and he saved his axe, too. Pity ther' ain't no such men alive nowadays!"

To this bantering narrative Will listened without undue gravity, but after a while, unobserved by any one, he opened the cheese-box in which were the dynamite and fuse used by the floaters to blast jams and dangerous rocks. He put four sticks of the stuff into his hip pockets, and a length of fuse into his blouse.

Then he went up the creek round the bend to his house and took a small corked bottle full of dry matches. The old pike-pole his father had used was under the eaves in the wood-shed. He threw it over his shoulder and started for the creek.

He was soon afloat on a little log that was easy to guide, and he worked his way to the middle of the stream, dodging or fending off other logs. He watched the current ahead to see that an unexpected drift did not carry him out of his course; he stood with his knees slightly bent and his head forward, and the quarter-inch spikes in the soles of his shoes gripped the log till it splintered.

Ahead of him was the jam, with logs hitting it every minute. Some of them dived out of sight instantly. Others slued round sidewise and climbed the back of the jam. The whole head of the jam was rolling, twisting and heaving; there could hardly be a more dangerous place for a man's legs.

To miss these rolling logs and yet find a landing was Will's hope. To go too far down would be to risk the pitch into the gorge and the probability of being carried past the jam. But as he plunged into a drift of logs and was unable to steer out of it in time, he had to take his chances as they came.

There wasn't really any great choice in the matter. It would be a leap for life, anyhow, wherever the log struck, and it might as well be a big leap as a little one.

Will was within a hundred feet of the jam before any one saw him. Then a small boy shouted, "There's Will Conway on a log!"

A hundred men, and as many women and children, looked

in time to see Will poise himself for the leap as his log approached the jam. Instead of holding the pole for a mere balance as he had been doing, he turned it parallel to his log and stooped for a vaulting jump.

Log after log struck, each with a heavy, musical thump—a half-dozen of them. Suddenly Will crouched, dropped his left shoulder, struck the iron pole point home in a log, and then sprang forward and up—up, while the log he had just left plunged down into the vortex.

He struck fairly on his feet and ran lightly over the uneasy logs to the motionless ones. Then the crowd on shore tossed its arms and cheered. The first and least of the dangers was overcome.

Will walked down to the jam, stepping from log to log, taking his time all the way. The crush at the boulder was very great. He looked the tangle over; some of the logs fairly stood on end, others were piled crosswise and lengthwise. A big one, its back splintered,—almost broken,—was evidently the key. As it lay broadside to the current, the water poured over it six inches deep at one end.

The other logs were thrust over and under it, and were lodged against the boulder. Just below the key log in the water beside the boulder, was the place for the dynamite, so Will decided after the examination. Then he went to work, while the crowd on shore looked on, wondering what he would do next, not knowing that he had dynamite. Will moved his spike along the jam, and found a straight spruce sapling, eight feet long and bare of bark, which some lumberman up at the log dump had used as a handspike.

He carried this to the keg log, and kneeling down, tied the dynamite sticks, one by one, to his sapling, lashing them fast with a stout string, as he had seen the men do. Then he fastened the fuse and ran it along the stick, steadying it by twine. This took only a few minutes—breathless ones to the onlookers.

Then Will examined the logs again, to be sure that he would put the charge in at the right place. When Boss

Koch saw him doing that, he said: "The coolest chicken I ever see!"

At last the sapling was shoved home, the dynamite was three feet under water and the end of the fuse was nearly a foot above the surface. Then Will stood up and looked into the gorge below.

He knew how the water ran there, for he had lived within a mile of it all his life. The story of his father's ride was not a new one; indeed, his father had pointed out to him the black streak of navigable water he had followed on that memorable drive of years ago.

Will could see the streak for a short distance along the right bank of the gorge. To the left the logs that missed the jam were lifting their noses against the ledge and tumbling over backwards.

Will pulled his belt a hole tighter, and drew his trouser-legs out of his stocking-tops; if he had to swim for it there wouldn't be bags of water on each leg drawing him under. He glanced back and saw where the pike-pole was. Then he took a match from the bottle and struck it on a bit of dry log. The flame sputtered into the fuse, and Will, grasping his pike, ran for the head of the jam, where the logs were thumping and rolling.

In the days when jams were broken with cant-hooks and axes, the floaters always tried to keep ahead of the rush of logs lest they be crushed among them; but in these days of high explosives one must take one's chances at the other end; and this is not the safest place, when all the logs are moving and grinding together.

The fuse was long and burned slowly. Will was at the head of the jam long before the explosion came. He waited with the pike-pole balancing.

The onlookers stood on tiptoe. The roar in the gorge was not quieting to any one's nerves, but at last a dozen logs were lifted into the air, splintered and broken, and the boulder disappeared in smoke and spray.

There was not so much noise as one might think ; just a sound that travelled low down, but a long distance.

A fifty-foot dome of grey spray, 'speckled with large black sticks and yellow splinters ten feet long, flashed up, and then Will Conway poised for a life-and-death struggle.

The jam quivered from end to end. It broke to pieces in great masses. Some logs came jutting up out of the black water ; hundreds plunged in with mighty splashing. All were tossed and pitched.

In a moment Will was stepping and jumping from log to log, running toward the gorge. Once he fell, and the crowd gasped ; but agile of body and cool of mind, he sprang to his feet again with only a shoe wet.

As he whisked into the gorge, one voice alone was raised. Boss Koch shouted : " Good boy ! Keep your nerve ! "

Will lifted a hand in reply, and was then whirled out of sight.

Till this time hardly any one had stirred, but now everybody turned and ran for the road, Koch and his drivers leading. They raced over little patches of snow, through a brook waist-deep with black water, and broke down a dozen lengths of fence getting over it into the highway. The river-men were dressed in flannels of bright colours, blue, red, checkered and plaid blouses and mackinaw trousers of all shades and hues. On them the sun shone with extraordinary effect as they strung out along the road, the best runners leading and the women bringing up the rear, all headed for Mad Tom's pool, where the gorge ended.

Down the gorge, below the first turn, the right bank is worn out and hangs far over the quick water. The turn is a gradual one, and the logs, once clear of the lifting wave above, swing round to the left again, end on, and along the side of a huge molasses-like roll.

On the opposite side is a fierce eddy, in which logs dance on end and are split in two by the crush. The rocks on either side are hung with moss wet by a cold, thick spray,

dashed up by the wind. Here Will found himself drawing toward the grinding mass in the eddy.

He was too far to the left. Quick as thought he jumped to a swifter log higher up the roll, and then to one beyond, and on to a third, clear of the eddy by a yard.

Not time to think of it, though, for ahead was business quite as dangerous—perhaps the worst of all.

The gorge narrows below the second turn, and the water, crowded into it, foams so high on both sides as almost to curl over. Down the centre runs the black streak. Will got into that, and the white water was higher than his head on each side. He shot forward with increasing speed. He saw one log three feet in diameter strike a ledge, to be hurled end over end through the air.

As the spray lifted, he saw ahead the black level of Mad Tom's pool, where there was safety.

But before that the water gushed out suddenly fan-like, until rollers ten feet high took up the speed, and only a greasy little trough lay down the centre.

Once more Will saw that he was off his course, headed too much for the waves. Among them he could do nothing—he would be tossed as from a catapult.

He jumped again. The log dived, and he had to go to one beyond. For a moment he hung, almost toppling, but he got his balance again, none too soon.

Ten seconds of awful roar followed. His pike-pole, which he held as a rope-walker holds his balancing-pole, was in the foam at both ends. Up and down on short, solid three-foot waves went his log, and through some soft foamy ones.

A water-soaked log came lurching at him, but fell short. Another plunged across, just ahead of him. It seemed as if the whole jam was there, waiting for him.

The next instant the tumble of water was left behind. The current became broad and level; its dancing was over for a while. The logs, after a bit of teetering, ceased their plunging, and floated on with rigid dignity. Will quickly pushed him-

self to shore and started up the road with his pike over his shoulder, beating the spray-drops off his woollen cap.

He was met by a whooping crowd of raftsmen, crying women and screaming boys, who all talked at once.

A few minutes later the drivers hurried away down-stream, and Will accompanied them. He was to have a man's wages for handling the dynamite at jams too big for cant-hook work.

Of course somebody went back to tell Will's mother what had become of him; in fact, they've been telling her ever since, greatly to her satisfaction.

“SMILER” HART’S WATCH.

BY PHIL MORE.

JOHN HART, or “Smiler,” as the men called him, for his mirth-loving nature, stood in the doorway of the engine-room, lounging easily against the frame set in the heavy brick walls and surveying the scene about the iron-mine.

It was a maze of tracks, ore-trestles, coal-sheds, slag-dumps and ash-dumps. Acres of stacked pig-iron filled one corner of the scene, with a Bessemer steel plant spouting flame and smoke on the right, and a billet and iron mill nearer on the left. Filling the greater part of the foreground were huge furnaces, with stacks carrying off the heat in long, trailing blue clouds.

Behind Smiler were three vertical blowing engines, which ran continuously all the year to make the blast. They “chugged” and jarred, and gave long, wailing gasps and shrieks for air. They were gigantic, old-fashioned walking-beam engines, with a steam-cylinder at one end of the beam, and the air-cylinder on the other, each vertical and twelve feet in length.

Smiler, a mere boy in appearance,—he was little more than five feet tall,—knew every part of the engines, from the thirty-foot fly-wheel to the smallest lever on the poppet-valve gear. Amid all the noise he could infallibly detect anything gone wrong by the unaccustomed sounds.

As Smiler stood resting his eyes from watching the dizzying, revolving spokes, a piece of coal struck the ground in front of him. He stepped to the edge of the doorway, and saw

a man standing on one of the coal-trestles and gesticulating. When he had caught Smiler's attention, he held up one finger, which, amid the din and uproar, signified, "What time is it?"

Smiler gravely took out his watch, looked at it, put it back into its pocket and then signalled back, "Half-past three." This reminded him that it was time to oil up, and he re-entered the engine-room. Every inlet valve was "f-f-f-ing" for air, and the air was wailing through the out-let valve on its way to the header pipe.

Smiler, taking an oil-can, began the rounds, when an unusual noise caught his attention. There was a snap—then a crash. At the crash he sprang forward to the throttle-valve on Number One engine; and before she had turned over to make another complete stroke he had stopped her.

He thought he knew what had happened, and before investigating he put the other two engines to their maximum speed, that the air pressure might be maintained, if possible. To keep the air pressure or blast steadily on the furnaces was the most important work the engines had to do.

Smiler then seized a lamp and a wrench and ran through the arch into the compressor-room, where the three air-cylinders stood in a row, fifteen feet apart. He ran up the stairway to the upper floor. There he looked down at the cylinder attached to the motionless engine.

It was as he had supposed. The yoke holding the manhole plate and gasket in position had broken, and the whole arrangement had dropped into the cylinder. Smiler sprang to the walking-beam, slid down the connecting-rod to the cross-head, and down the piston-rod to the cylinder-head, standing there a moment on the immense casting, which was five feet in diameter.

Without a thought of danger he squatted down, stuck his feet through the small oblong opening and wriggled through to his shoulders. Holding up his arms, with the wrench and lamp in his hands, he reached out with his toes and touched the air-piston. The engine being at less than mid-stroke, this was a third of the way up in the cylinder.

Drawing his arms through, he crouched down, and so gained the interior of the cylinder. It was like an oven. The gleaming, polished walls reflected his light. He could not touch any part ; it was all too hot, and he moved his lamp round over the top of the piston, looking for the broken yoke and plate.

A moment after Smiler had dropped out of sight, Dennison, the boss furnace-man, entered the engine-room excitedly. He had missed the familiar beat of one machine, and feared a diminution of the blast.

"Smiler!" he shouted, looking round. "Oh, Smiler! Smiler!" Then he went to the throttle-valve and took up the starting-bar.

Meanwhile Smiler gathered up the broken yoke and reached up to lay it on the top of the head, shoving his hand up through the narrow opening. The plate was a heavier piece, and he shouldered it first. It was a severe strain in the close, hot cylinder to push it up through at arm's length. As he laid it beside the broken yoke he felt the piston beneath his feet move.

For an instant his heart stopped beating.

The piston went down slowly, with a hesitating motion. It would go down about four feet more, if the engine had been started, and then rush up twelve feet, and flatten him against the iron head! This he realised. But when the piston had moved down two feet it stopped. The manhole by which he had entered was now almost five feet above his head. He gave a hoarse cry of terror, but it only reverberated in his ears. Above the jar, pound, and scream of the other engines he could hardly hope to make himself heard.

He felt the jerk of the engine on the piston beneath his feet as Dennison tried to start it. Luckily the furnaceman was not an adept at this work. Who could be meddling with the engine? Smiler wondered. Hoping to attract the man's attention, he threw the wrench out of the manhole. It disappeared. The piston continued to descend. Smiler, in an agony of apprehension, cast the lamp after the wrench.

Meanwhile the polished, hot walls radiated heat, and the piston burned his feet. If he could only jump and catch the manhole! But in the narrow space he was unable to spring more than a few inches. Taking off his jumper, he tried to throw it through, but it fell back on him.

The piston was jarring harder. Smiler knew that the bungler was making desperate efforts to start the engine, and had opened the valve wider.

Then Smiler threw his keys, his knife and his hat through the hole. At last out flew his beloved watch. It sailed in a high curve and disappeared.

Outside something fell on the stone floor near Dennison and broke with a crash. He looked down. A watch! Smiler's watch! Dennison looked round for the young fellow, and saw the other things—Smiler's keys, knife, lamp, hat and wrench. But where was Smiler? Dennison deciding that something was wrong, shut off the steam.

Then, running up the steps which Smiler had ascended but a few minutes before, he looked and called for the young engineer. Seeing the open manhole, he went to the top of the head.

"Smiler!" he called, bending over the hollow, echoing cylinder.

"Yes, I'm in here!" Smiler answered.

Dennison, lying out full length on the head, reached down his hand and Smiler grasped it. As Dennison slowly rose to his knees with his burden, Smiler ascended inside until he was able to grasp the edge of the head, and with the furnace-man's assistance he emerged, streaming with perspiration, and so weak with fright that he could hardly stand.

"Close call, young fellow!" Dennison observed grimly.

"Close enough," Smiler returned. "Help me get this manhole head into position so I can start up. If you had known how, you'd have had me flattened out long ago."

A DOG OF RUDDY COVE.

BY NORMAN DUNCAN.

HE was a Newfoundland dog, born of reputable parents at Back Arm and decently bred in Ruddy Cove, which is on the north-east coast. He had black hair, short, straight and wiry,—the curly-haired breed has failed on the island,—and broad, ample shoulders, which his forbears had transmitted to him from generations of hauling wood.

He was heavy, awkward and ugly, resembling somewhat a great draft-horse. But he pulled with a will, fended for himself, and within the knowledge of men had never stolen a fish; so he had a high place in the hearts of all the people of the Cove, and a safe one in their estimation.

“Skipper! Skipper! Here, b’y!”

The ringing call, in the voice of young Billy Topsail, his master, a fisherman’s son, never failed to bring the dog from the kitchen with an eager rush, when the snow lay deep on the rocks, and all the paths of the wilderness were ready for the sled. He stood stock-still for the harness, and at the first “Hi, b’y! Gee up, there!” he bounded away with a wagging tail and a glad bark. It was as if nothing pleased him so much on a frosty morning as the prospect of a hard day’s work.

If the call came in summer-time when the Skipper was dozing in the cool shadow of a flake,—a platform of boughs for drying fish,—he scrambled to his feet, took his clog* in

* In Newfoundland the law requires that all dogs shall be clogged as a precaution against their killing sheep and goats which run wild. The clog is in the form of a billet of wood, weighing at least seven and a half pounds and tied to the dog’s neck.

his mouth and ran, all a-quiver for what might come, to where young Billy waited. If the clog were taken off,—as it was almost sure to be,—it meant sport in the water. Then the Skipper would paw the ground and whine until the stick was flung out for him. But best of all he loved to dive for stones.

At the peep of many a day, too, he went out in the punt to the fishing-grounds with Billy Topsail, and there kept the lad good company all the day long. It was because he sat on the little cuddy in the bow, as if keeping a lookout ahead, that he was called the Skipper.

“Sure, ’tis a clever dog, that!” was Billy’s boast. “He would save life—that dog would!”

This was proved beyond doubt when little Isaiah Tommy Goodman toddled over the wharf-head, where he had been playing with a squid. Isaiah Tommy was four years old, and would surely have been drowned had not the Skipper strolled down the wharf just at that moment.

The Skipper was obedient to the instinct of all Newfoundland dogs to drag the sons of men from the water. He plunged in and caught Isaiah Tommy by the collar of his pinafore. Still following his instinct, he kept the child’s head above water with powerful strokes of his fore-paws while he towed him to shore. Then the outcry which Isaiah Tommy immediately set up brought his mother to complete the rescue.

For this deed the Skipper was petted for a day and a half, and fed with fried caplin and salt pork, to his evident gratification. No doubt he was persuaded that he had acted worthily. However that be, he continued in merry moods, in affectionate behaviour, in honesty,—although the fish were even then drying on the flakes, all exposed,—and he carried his clog like a hero.

“Skipper,” Billy Topsail would ejaculate, “you *do* be a clever dog!”

One day in the fall of the year, when high winds spring suddenly from the land, Billy Topsail was fishing from the punt, the *Never Give Up*, over the shallows off Molly’s Head. It was “fish weather,” as the Ruddy Cove men say—grey, cold

and misty. The harbour entrance lay two miles to the south-west. The bluffs which marked it were hardly discernible, for the mist hung thick off the shore. Four punts and a skiff were bobbing half a mile farther out to sea, their crews fishing with hook and line over the side. Thicker weather threatened and the day was near spent.

"'Tis time to be off home, b'y," said Billy to the dog. "'Tis getting thick in the sou'west."

The Skipper stretched himself and wagged his tail. He had no word to say, but Billy, who, like all fishermen in remote places, had formed the habit of talking to himself, supplied the answer.

"'Tis that, Billy, b'y," said he. "The punt's as much as one hand can manage in a fair wind. An 'tis a dead beat to the harbour now."

Then Billy said a word for himself. "We'll put in for ballast. The punt's too light for a gale."

He sculled the punt to the little cove by the Head, and there loaded her with rocks. Her sails, mainsail and tiny jib were spread; and she was pointed for Grassy Island, on the first leg of her beat into the wind. By this time two other punts were under way, and the sails of the skiff were fluttering as her crew prepared to beat home for the night. The *Never Give Up* was ahead of the fleet, and held her lead in such fine fashion as made Billy Topsail's heart swell with pride.

The wind had gained in force. It was sweeping down from the hills in gusts. Now it fell to a breeze, and again it came swiftly with angry strength. Nor could its advance be perceived, for the sea was choppy and the bluffs shielded the inshore waters.

"We'll fetch the harbour on the next tack," Billy muttered to the Skipper, who was whining in the bow.

He put the steering oar hard a-lee to bring the punt about. A gust caught the sails. The boat heeled before it, and her gunwale was under water before Billy could make a move to save her. The wind forced her down, pressing heavily upon the canvas. Her ballast shifted and she toppled over.

Boy and dog were thrown into the sea—the one aft, the other forward. Billy dived deep to escape entanglement with the rigging of the boat. He had long ago learned the lesson that presence of mind wins half the fight in perilous emergencies. The coward miserably perishes where the brave man survives. With his courage leaping to meet his predicament, he struck out for windward and rose to the surface.

He looked about for the punt. She had been heavily weighted with ballast, and he feared for her. What was he to do if she had been too heavily weighted? Even as he looked she sank. She had righted under water; the tip of the mast was the last he saw of her.

The sea—cold, fretful, vast—lay all about him. The coast was half a mile to windward; the punts, out to sea, were laboriously beating toward him, and could make no greater speed. He had to choose between the punts and the rocks.

A whine—with a strange note in it—attracted his attention.

The big dog had caught sight of him, and was beating the water in a frantic effort to approach quickly. But the dog had never whined like that before.

“Hi, Skipper!” Billy called. “Steady, b’y! Steady!”

Billy took off his boots as fast as he could. The dog was coming nearer, still whining strangely, and madly pawing the water. Billy was mystified. What possessed the dog? It was as if he had been seized with a fit of terror. Was he afraid of drowning? His eyes were fairly flaring. Such a light had never been in them before.

In the instant he had for speculation the boy lifted himself high in the water and looked intently into the dog’s eyes. It was terror he saw in them; there could be no doubt about that, he thought. The dog was afraid for his life. At once Billy was filled with dread. He could not crush the feeling down. Afraid of the Skipper,—the old, affectionate Skipper,—his own dog, which he had reared from a puppy! It was absurd. But he was afraid, nevertheless—desperately afraid.

“Back, b’y!” he cried. “Get back, sir!”

Billy was a strong swimmer. He had learned to swim where the water is cold—cold, often, as the icebergs stranded in the harbour can make it. The water was bitter cold now ; but he did not fear it, nor did he doubt that he could accomplish the long swim which lay before him. It was the unaccountable behaviour of the dog which disturbed him—his failure in obedience, which could not be explained. The dog was now within three yards, and excited past all reason.

“Back, sir !” Billy screamed. “Get back with you !”

The dog was not deterred by the command. He did not so much as hesitate. Billy raised his hand as if to strike him—a threatening gesture which had sent the Skipper home with his tail between his legs many a time. But it had no effect now.

“Get back !” Billy screamed again.

It was plain that the dog was not to be bidden. Billy threw himself on his back, supported himself with his hands and kicked at the dog with his feet.

The Skipper was blinded by the splashing. He whined and held back. Then blindly he came again. Billy moved slowly from him, head foremost, still churning the water with his feet. But, swimming thus, he was no match for the dog. With his head thrown back to escape the blows, the Skipper forged after him. He was struck in the jaws, in the throat, and again in the jaws. But he pawed on, taking every blow without complaint, and gaining inch by inch. Soon he was so close that the lad could no longer move his feet freely. Then the dog chanced to catch one foot with his paw, and forced it under. Billy could not beat him off.

No longer exposed, the dog crept up—paw over paw, forcing the boy's body lower and lower. His object was clear to Billy. The Skipper frenzied by terror, the boy thought, would try to save himself by climbing on his shoulders.

“Skipper !” he cried. “You'll drown me ! Get back !”

The futility of attempting to command obedience from a crazy dog struck Billy Topsail with force. He must act otherwise, and that quickly, if he were to escape. There seemed

to be but one thing to do. He took a long breath and let himself sink—down—down—as deep as he dared. Down—down—until he retained breath sufficient but to strike to the right and rise again.

The dog—as it was made known later—rose as high as he could force himself, and looked about in every direction, with his mouth open and his ears rigidly cocked. He gave two sharp barks, like sobs, and a long, mournful whine. Then, as if acting upon sudden thought, he dived.

For a moment nothing was to be seen of either boy or dog. There was nothing but a choppy sea in that place. Men who were watching thought that both had followed the *Never Give Up* to the bottom.

In the momentary respite under water Billy perceived that his situation was desperate. He would rise, he was sure, but only to renew the struggle. How long he could keep the dog off he could not tell. Until the punts came down to his aid? He thought not.

He came to the surface prepared to dive again. But the Skipper had disappeared. An ejaculation of thanksgiving was yet on the boy's lips when the dog's black head rose and moved swiftly toward him. Billy had a start of ten yards—or something more.

He turned on his side and set off at top speed. There was no better swimmer among the lads of the harbour. Was he a match for a powerful Newfoundland dog? It was soon evident that he was not.

The Skipper gained rapidly. Billy felt a paw strike his foot. He put more strength into his strokes. Next the paw struck the calf of his leg. The dog was upon him now—pawing his back. Billy could not sustain the weight. To escape, that he might take up the fight in another way, he dived again.

The dog was waiting when Billy came up—waiting eagerly, on the alert to continue the chase.

"Skipper, old fellow—good old dog!" Billy called in a soothing voice. "Steady, sir! Down, sir—back!"

The dog was not to be deceived. He came, by turns whining

and gasping. He was more excited, more determined, than ever. Billy waited for him. The fight was to be face to face. The boy had determined to keep him off with his hands until strength failed—to drown him if he could. All love for the dog had gone out of his heart. The weeks of close and merry companionship, of romps and rambles and sport, were forgotten. Billy was fighting for life. So he waited without pity, hoping only that his strength might last until he had conquered.

When the dog was within reach Billy struck him in the face. A snarl and an angry snap was the result.

Rage seemed suddenly to possess the dog. He held back for a moment, growling fiercely, and then attacked with a rush. Billy fought as best he could, trying to clutch his enemy by the neck and to force his head beneath the waves. The effort was vain; the dog eluded his grasp and renewed the attack. In another moment he had laid his heavy paws on the boy's shoulders.

The weight was too much for Billy. Down he went, freed himself, and struggled to the surface, gasping for breath. It appeared to him now that he had but a moment to live. He felt his self-possession going from him—and at that moment his ears caught the sound of a voice.

“Put your arm——”

The voice seemed to come from far away. Before the sentence was completed the dog's paws were again on Billy's shoulders and the water stopped the boy's hearing. What were they calling to him? The thought that some helping hand was near inspired him. With this new courage to aid, he dived for the third time. The voice was nearer—clearer—when he came up, and he heard every word.

“Put your arm around his neck!” one man cried.

“Catch him by the scruff of the neck!” cried another.

Billy's self-possession returned. He would follow this direction. The Skipper swam anxiously to him. It may be that he wondered what this new attitude meant. It may be that he hoped reason had returned to the boy—that at last

he would allow himself to be saved. Billy caught the dog by the scruff of the neck when he was within arm's length. The Skipper wagged his tail and turned about. There was a brief pause, during which the faithful old dog determined upon the direction he would take. He espied the punts, which had borne down with all speed. Toward them he swam, and there was something of pride in his mighty strokes, something of exultation in his whine. Billy struck out with his free hand, and soon boy and dog were pulled over the side of the nearest punt.

Through it all, as Billy now knew, the dog had only wanted to save him.

That night Billy Topsail took the Skipper aside for a long and confidential talk. "Skipper," said he, "I beg your pardon. You see, I didn't know what 'twas you wanted. I'm sorry I ever had a hard thought against you, and I'm sorry I tried to drown you. When I thought you only wanted to save yourself, 'twas Billy Topsail you were thinking of. When I thought you wanted to climb atop of me, 'twas my collar you wanted to catch. When I thought you wanted to bite me, 'twas a scolding you were giving me for my foolishness. Skipper, b'y, honest, I beg your pardon. Next time I'll know that all a Newfoundland dog wants is half a chance to tow me ashore. And I'll give him a whole chance. But, Skipper, don't you think you might have given me a chance to do something for myself?"

At which the Skipper wagged his tail.

AFTER MANY DAYS.

THE GRATITUDE OF A SIOUX.

ONCE in his life old Thad Griffin, the trapper, did a very foolish thing ; at least that was what he called the act when he thought of it at all, for a long time afterward.

Two young Sioux braves having attacked him, Thad had killed one and wounded the other. But he took the wounded man to his cabin, dressed the wound, nursed the Indian back to health, and then restored his gun and canoe, and told him to go home to his own people.

But the Indian did not lead a scalping party back to the trapper's camp, as Griffin had half-expected he would. Nothing more was heard of him. Three years after, when Griffin left Fort Snelling at the end of September, and started up the Minnesota River to begin his fall hunt, the incident had almost faded from his mind. He paddled to the head-waters of the Pomme de Terre, and camped a few days in a little thicket of scrub-oak, while he looked round to see what the prospect was for furs—and for Indians. He had kept his eyes open all the way up-river, for the Sioux were reported to be on the war-path. This, however, was somewhat in the trapper's favour, for they would be likely to travel in big bands, and with care he might the easier avoid them.

There were "slathers of fur sign," but no traces of Indians in this region of rolling prairie, broken at the eastward by a belt of heavy timber. So one day Griffin set out with his gun, to try for a saddle of venison. When the afternoon was almost over he found a good-sized buck, and presently started for camp with the hide and saddle slung to his back,

Clear sky and bracing atmosphere and the promise of a successful season made the blood fairly bound through the trapper's veins, and he strode along feeling as though he would like to sing. Indians were far from his thoughts just then. The greater was his dismay when, just as he had reached the top of a low ridge half-way between the woods and his camp, he saw a band of forty Sioux coming up on the other side.

Griffin had had many a "fuss" with these same Indians, and he recognised them instantly as belonging to a village that wintered in the Ottertail woods away off at the northeast. Evidently they had been out on the Dakota prairies for a big buffalo hunt, for they were on foot and leading their ponies, which were loaded with hides and dried meat.

Flat in the grass dropped Griffin, but not soon enough to escape the sharp eyes of the Indians. Raising a terrific whoop, they left the ponies to look out for themselves, and came on in a body, while Griffin slipped the venison from his shoulders and started at his best pace toward the belt of timber.

The Indians were not more than two hundred yards away when Griffin sighted them; but in running he had the advantage of going down-hill, and he had almost doubled the distance before they reached the top of the ridge and began to shoot at him. None of the bullets happened to hit the moving target.

Griffin glanced over his shoulder. As he expected, a dozen of the swiftest runners had thrown off their blankets and, knives in hand, were approaching at a rate that meant mischief for a man who must cling to a twelve-pound gun. But the trapper had been in worse places than this, and he felt that if he could once get into the woods, with night falling, he could dodge the Indians.

He was still a half-mile from the timber when he looked back once more. One of the braves was now far in advance of the others, but all his pursuers were gaining, and Griffin began to fear that he might lose the race, tired as he was from his hunt and handicapped by the weight he carried.

That foremost Indian must die! Griffin slackened his pace

a trifle, that he might get his breath before trying to take aim. The Indian put on an extra burst of speed.

When Griffin was close to the timber, the leading Indian had come so near that the trapper could hear the patter of his footsteps. Thinking it must be now or never, the trapper wheeled and was about to pull trigger when his adversary made a movement that caused Griffin to hesitate from sheer surprise. The Indian waved him toward the woods.

"White man no shoot!" he shouted. "Me him friend! No stop; Injun no ketch um!"

The white man took a good look. This—yes, this was the same young brave he had spared and nursed! Realising that, Griffin grasped the meaning of the words, and instantly he faced about and made for the woods again.

"White man saved Injun, now Injun save white man!" the savage called as soon as the trees and bush hid them from sight. "White man hide um, heap quick. Injun run by; no ketch um. Bimeby dark, white man run off."

Griffin shaped his course for the nearest clump of bush, and put his last atom of strength into a leap that landed him fair in its centre. He spread himself flat and clung close to the ground. Yelling like mad, to lead his mates away, the young Sioux kept on into the woods.

It was so contrary to the trapper's training to trust an Indian that his first movement was to slip out his knife. He meant to be prepared in case the Sioux should pounce on top of him.

But the Indian tore on into the forest, and after him went the others. They passed so near the place where Griffin lay that they might have heard his hard breathing had they not been running so fast and yelling so lustily.

But a fat old fellow who brought up the rear gave over the chase at the edge of the forest. He leaned against a tree not twenty feet from Griffin's bush, evidently intending to wait until the others came back with the white man's scalp.

The young braves kept up the search until after dark. All that time the old fellow lingered by his tree, and Griffin durst not even stretch for fear of being heard.

He hardly knew what action to take. It seemed that the young brave had meant him to get away as soon as the crowd passed ; and it would be easy enough to shoot the old Indian, and then make his escape in the darkness.

But the trapper finally decided that the right thing to do was to lie still. The old fellow might be his friend's father for all he knew. To kill him there might throw suspicion upon the young man. And Griffin knew that if the Indians discovered the trick that had been played upon them, they would kill the perpetrator.

"I won't do it !" said Griffin to himself. "Not if I lose my scalp for it."

By the time the band returned from the fruitless chase the trapper had got his breath. He wasted none of it, we may be certain, in the course of the impromptu council that the Indians held before they left the timber. Probably the talk lasted less than five minutes. But that seems a long time to a man who feels enemies crowd around his hiding-place and dreads that at any instant they may fairly fall over him.

But finally they did leave, and Griffin crept out of the bush and fetched a wide circuit to reach his camp. He did not feel any appetite for supper just then. What he wanted to do, and did, was to load his belongings into his canoe and, heading down-stream, put a wide stretch of river between himself and the redskins.

Griffin never saw or heard of the young Sioux again ; but the trapper had a better opinion of the tribe and the race from that time forward.

"Sure enough," he used to say, when he told the story, "most of 'em are bad, and others of 'em are worse ; but I tell you, boys, sure enough, some Injuns are *folks* !"

A BID FOR LIBERTY.

A TRUE STORY OF PRISON BREAKERS.

WHEN the reputation of Clinton Prison as the safest jail in the State of New York was shaken by the escape of four men, very few of the details of the affair were allowed to be known to the public. Taken altogether, it was one of the most remarkable escapes from prison ever accomplished in any country, and only the isolation of Dannemora, standing, as it does, in the Adirondacks, made it possible to get the men back again.

The four men, or rather one of the four—for it was the skill of one man that accomplished it all—tunnelled their way out of Clinton Prison right under the noses of their guards. It took them four years to complete their tunnel, and every bit of the work was done during working hours, when every minute of the time of the convicts was supposed to be accounted for by the keepers in charge.

The discipline at Clinton is iron. It is never relaxed, because the State of New York sends the most desperate of its criminals to this prison.

Inside the forty-foot walls are many shops, where the convicts are employed by day. One of these shops, the tin shop, is within twenty-five feet of the south wall; and at this very point on the wall is the station from which the armed guards march on their daily patrols.

In the tin shop gang were several life men, and for that reason there were two keepers there to every one in the other shops. Among the life men employed in the tin shop at that time was Peter James.

James was the leader of a gang of bank burglars, who raided the town of Bedford, N.Y., some years ago, robbed a bank and the post office, secured a large amount of money, and were making their escape when confronted by old Adams, the village postmaster, and his son, both armed with repeating rifles, which they knew how to use. It was James who put a bullet through the aged postmaster's heart, and it was for this murder that he was sentenced to Clinton Prison for life.

Peter James belonged to the old school of bank burglars. He was a master mechanic, could make a key out of a stick of wood; figure out a safe combination with a piece of wet tissue paper, aided by the keenness of his ears, and tunnel his way like a mole into a bank vault and loot it at his leisure.

He could see opportunities that no other man could, and the minute he cast his eyes around the walls of Clinton Prison on his arrival he saw a chance for escape that equally desperate men had never even considered. His plan was simple. It was to tunnel under the walls from the cellar of the tin shop.

For months he was a model prisoner, but secretly working to get into the tin shop gang. At the end of the year his skill as a mechanic won him the place he sought. The next thing was to get into the cellar of the tin shop.

His opportunity came to him quite unexpectedly. There is a small stationary engine in the cellar, and when the convict who attended it was taken ill, James assisted a keeper to run it for a day. That day in the cellar gave him the "lay" of the land. He picked out the very place to start his tunnel, but it was weeks and weeks before he got a chance to take out a spoonful of dirt.

When the convict who ran the engine recovered, he was sent to another shop. A new engine was put in, which would run itself. All that had to be done was to look at the steam gauge and the indicator three or four times a day, and James, who had shown himself a competent engineer, was told off

from the gang just so many times each day to attend to that duty.

For weeks James made so many trips each day to the engine in the cellar. He was never away more than a few minutes at a time, but at least two minutes out of each trip was spent in picking at the mortar of a big stone in the cellar foundation with a piece of tin he had smuggled down with him.

At the end of the first month James had the stone loose. Then one day he took it out and began his tunnel, arranging the opening so that he could slip the big stone back at the slightest alarm.

With only a few minutes a day to work James managed to get five feet of tunnel done without having to enter the hole itself to dig. Then for a brief period he stopped all work.

It was necessary for him to get some protection for his prison uniform, else the dirt on it when he came to the surface would excite suspicion. Where he got the materials for a suit of overalls to slip over his stripes no one will ever know ; but he did construct such a suit, and he kept it hidden in the cellar, where he could get it when he wanted it. As for the dirt he took out of the hole—he brought it into the cellar and stowed it away in dark corners, stamping it down hard.

From this point on James realised that a few minutes at a time would not suffice for the work he had to do. So he disarranged part of the engine so that it would need more attention, and for a week was called on more frequently to go into the cellar.

For a time a keeper went with him, not from any suspicion of what he was doing, but to help to fix the engine. Then James began going down alone, and staying a little longer each time. The keepers allowed him a certain amount of freedom, and although once in a while a keeper would drop into the cellar while he was there, it wasn't often.

The first thing James did when his opportunities for work

increased was to begin the lining of his tunnel. He lined the completed five feet with tin and bits of board, and it was as fine a piece of engineering as an expert could have done. He hadn't tunnelled under country banks for nothing, and he wasn't taking chances of a cave-in at a critical time.

Having finished this, James began the hardest part of his work, for this man of remarkable observation, in the moment he was outside of the walls on his arrival had taken in every obstacle he must encounter when he came to tunnel his way out. He had not failed to notice that the road outside the wall was very low, and that the ground inside the wall was at least three feet higher than the road outside.

He saw that if he burrowed straight out he would emerge in the road just outside of the wall, where anybody might see him. So, with his five feet of tunnel completed, he started straight down, and never stopped until he had completed it for a distance of six feet. Then he started out again toward the prison wall, lining his tunnel as he went and stamping down the dirt in the cellar as fast as he took it out.

At this juncture a remarkable thing happened. James had manufactured his tools from the scraps he could smuggle into the cellar from the tin shop without being seen.

It was a remarkable collection of implements, and no visitor to Clinton Prison should go away without seeing the glass case in which they are now kept. Tiny trowels, little shovels, iron bars, a very amateurish-looking hatchet, and a number of other things, including a short-handled but fairly large spade, make up the collection. How he got the spade is, and probably ever will be, a mystery.

It may have been that certain other convicts saw him sneaking away with scraps of metal, or the story he tells himself, that they heard him stamping down the earth in the cellar, may be true, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that three other convicts found out what he was doing, and by the mysterious method of communication used in a prison served notice on him that they were in on the play, or they would squeal.

James had never planned to share his tunnel with any one else, but he had no alternative now. The men who discovered his secret were Ed. Kennedy, John Collins, and John Elliott, one of them a lifer like James, the others twenty-year men, who had already forfeited their commutation time.

After two and a half years of work James had got under the wall of the prison, only to find that he would have to take others with him, and thus increase the risk, or give it all up. Forced to let these other men in with him, James decided to make some use of them.

The toughest part of his work had arrived. He must remove the stone, crawl through five feet of tunnel, drop six feet and crawl to the prison wall, fifteen feet farther along, every time he wanted to do any work. If any one came in while he was there all was lost, for he could not replace the stone.

James hit upon a scheme to minimise the danger of detection, but to carry it into effect he had to have a bell. He got the bell all right ; where he got it is as much a mystery as where he got other things that he used, but he got it, also some fifty yards of strong twine.

Every time he went into the cellar to work he carried the bell with him. One end of the twine was attached to the bell and the other end was in a secret place in the shops, where any one of his three confederates could pull it without being noticed. How the twine was entirely hidden from the keepers is not known, but James has confessed that he used a bell in this way, and the bell and the twine were found in the cellar after the escape.

The moment one of the three in the shops saw a move on the part of a keeper that looked ominous he would pull the twine, and the jingling bell down in the tunnel would warn James to get out at once. Time and again James had just got to work under the prison wall when the bell rang, and he had to come hustling back.

The alarms of this kind were more often false than not, but James always heeded them promptly. On several occasions

he got out of his hole just in time. On one occasion, he says, he didn't get time to place the stone over the opening before a keeper came into the cellar, but the keeper overlooked the opening in the dark, and as soon as he went away James put the stone in place again.

Thus little by little this clever desperado worked, until finally one day he ran his tunnel right up against the brick wall of the sewer which runs through the main road of Danne-mora. He broke into the sewer and found himself at the foot of a manhole.

But the manhole was guarded by a strong gate of iron bars ; and, besides, it opened up right in the middle of the road. It was necessary to bend the bars back to get past the manhole, and this was done two weeks later by James with an iron bar which he secured in the same mysterious way that later he got his other tools.

Following the sewer he came up to another manhole in a field just opposite the prison. There he forced another iron gate, and crawled up to daylight.

James could have gone out then, but he didn't. His plans were far from complete.

He had tunnelled his way to liberty, but there were other things to be done ; so he returned to the cellar, put the stone in place, and for the next few weeks went into the tunnel only twice, and then merely to shore up certain weak spots he had found.

As soon as possible James let his confederates know that the tunnel was done. A whispered oath was taken by the four that no one should attempt to go before the others, and that once out they would all stick together.

James then gave each man a share of the work of preparation. He agreed to smuggle into the cellar and make into clothing a lot of blue jeans. He assigned one of the other men to make, in the tin shop, a large tin cone and a tin flask in which they could carry water.

All these things were to be smuggled into the cellar and secreted by him. All four prisoners then agreed to

smuggle into the tin shops after each meal a certain amount of bread and corned beef.

The plan was carried out perfectly. The tin cone and water flask were made, and every bit of bread and corned beef brought to James he crumbled into a kind of hash, which was deposited in the cone. The flask was filled with water, the suits were made, and everything was finally in readiness for the escape.

This whole elaborate scheme had been planned and carried out right under the noses of the keepers of the prison, and the tunnel itself, some fifty feet long, had been constructed a minute or two at a time. And it had all been done in four years, a remarkably short time, considering what had been achieved.

Saturday afternoon, July 18, was the day set for the attempt; and Kennedy, Collins, Elliott left everything to James, agreeing to obey his orders.

James went into the cellar at one o'clock to attend to the engines. He quickly got out the food, water, and clothing, removed the stone, and throwing off his uniform of stripes, put on a suit of overalls.

Then he pulled gently at the twine, and Kennedy, who was watching it upstairs, saw the move, and in a few moments was in the cellar. As soon as Kennedy left the shop Collins moved to the cellar stairs, followed by Elliott, and at two o'clock all four men were in the cellar dressed for the attempt, and not a man of them had been missed by the keepers.

It was a matter of a very few minutes for the quartette to go through the tunnel and come up in the manhole in the field. Everything favoured them. It was pouring with rain, and few persons were abroad.

Once out, they made for the Chateaugay branch of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad, a quarter of a mile away. They followed the tracks three miles east, and then started due north, their idea being to get across the border into Canada, less than thirty miles away.

They followed the north star that night, being entirely

unfamiliar with the country, and by the morning of the next day had reached a shack in the woods some six miles away, where they stopped to rest and take their first meal.

Two hours elapsed before the escape was discovered in the prison. Then it was impossible to tell just what men were gone.

Half an hour was lost in lining up the prisoners in gangs, to see who was missing ; and as soon as the identity of the men was known the alarm whistle blew, and in less than two hours more 300 armed men, keepers, county officials, and citizens were on the roads looking for them. The escape was telegraphed far and wide, and the most remarkable man hunt that ever took place in the State was soon under way.

Some of the men might have escaped had they separated, but all were true to the oath. Sunday the rain, which still fell, soured the hash of corned beef and bread crumbs, and Elliott, who ate ravenously, was taken with cramps. He was carried several miles by the others, but finally collapsed entirely. It was necessary to cure him or leave him.

By Wednesday the four had dragged themselves to a point near Altoona, called Purdys Mills. Wednesday night they broke into the general store for the sole purpose of getting a bottle of Jamaica ginger for Elliott.

They got the medicine and cured Elliott, but the robbery was their undoing, for it gave the searchers the first clue to the whereabouts of the convicts, and from that time on they were doomed. The roads fairly bristled with the rifles of woodsmen and constables, all after the rewards ; for it is 50 dollars a head in America for each convict returned, dead or alive.

Thursday morning Elliott, emerging from the woods, got a rifle ball in the hip. With James, he made for the Chazy River, the other two close behind.

Elliott was dragged along until noon, when he and Kennedy were cornered and taken. James and Collins followed the river for several miles and then tried to cross.

The heavy rains had made the Chazy a raging flood. James

couldn't swim, but Collins could, and both men plunged in, the pursuers close behind. Collins kept himself afloat, but James was swept away and went down twice before Collins got him and hauled him out on the other side.

Half-starved, weakened by exposure, their clothes hanging in rags, these two hunted men made for the railroad, and succeeded in boarding a moving freight. But they were hardly aboard when men with rifles came up and hauled them off.

Friday morning the men were back in Clinton Prison. The reward of James's four years of work and planning was five days of suffering for himself and his comrades, during which time they had got but 25 miles on their road to the border. When they were captured they were within four miles of the line.

Warden Deyo, to whom the entire credit for the recapturing is due, was exceedingly kind to the unfortunate men after their return. They were put back at work in the shops as soon as they were able to do anything, and no unusual punishment was meted out to them.

But of the 1,100 prisoners in Clinton to-day these four men are the most carefully guarded.

"BIG DAN."

BY RODNEY H. BRANDON.

DAN was a big, jolly Nova Scotian, with a heavy voice and a homely face. He was well liked from the day he joined the gang. The men called him "Big Dan" because he was six feet two inches in height and weighed more than two hundred pounds—nearly all muscle and bone.

Dan was a man of little education, and was a slow thinker, but his energy and faithfulness were unmatched, and the instinct of "common sense" was strong in him.

His working partner, Hubble, was much like Dan in physique, but very different in everything else. He had graduated from one of the larger Western universities the year before, with a fine football record and a good, passing grade in mechanics. Ambitious to learn the business thoroughly, he had started at the bottom to work his way up.

In November John Johnson's gang, in which these men were working, was engaged in raising a forty-wire line over a new coal-shed.

The setting of the new and higher poles was quickly accomplished, and Johnson turned his attention to getting the wires up the additional height without crossing or breaking them.

Johnson's knowledge and experience were too limited for the position of responsibility which he was holding. He evolved the idea that as the poles on each side were of extra height, on account of the building, the cross-arms could be raised the additional distance—nearly twenty feet—by sliding

them up the new poles without "cutting slack" into the wires.

This operation was made particularly difficult by the fact that the position of the wires below made the handling of blocks and tackle of much size almost impossible. It was Johnson's opinion that two men could carry the arms up the poles by main strength, climbing as best they could under their weight.

Dan openly scouted the idea, and Hubble shook his head over it, but Johnson was firm. He looked over the little group of men and asked for volunteers. No one moved.

Probably it was the old-time pride of the college man asserting itself; it might have been a sense of duty; at any rate, Hubble put on his spurs at the second call and walked to one of the poles. He stuck his tools into his belt and began climbing, jamming his spurs into the soft pine with shocks that made the insulators rattle. No one followed him. Big Dan, still in doubt, was looking side-wise at the pole.

In three minutes Hubble had the arm unbolted and ready to be raised. He looked down with a smile at the group of men below.

"Coming, Dan?" he said.

Dan put on his spurs in silence and went up the pole.

Johnson could not have selected two men better fitted for the task than these two. Both were of almost the same height and weight, and were the most powerful men in the gang. They had been trained, however, in entirely different schools. Dan's was the strength which comes from a hard life in the lumber camps. Hubble was fresh from the football field.

They swung under the arm and went up with it, slowly. Progress at first did not require great effort, but as they increased the distance from the pole below, the slack in the neighbouring sections of wire was rapidly exhausted. Hubble called a halt when they were half-way up.

"Hold her a minute, Dan! This is no race!"

"Gettin' tired already?" asked Dan. "Expected better of you than that."

"I'm not tired yet. But hold your wind," answered Hubble, "you'll need it."

Again they started upward. The light breeze sang through the tightening wires in a steadily heightening key. The ties on the neighbouring poles were twisting with the strain.

The pressure upon the spur-shanks was so great that they bent from the men's legs, and the straps seemed to wear into the bones of their knees. If any strap broke both men would fall.

Johnson, on the ground below, saw his mistake now, and called to the men to stop. But it was too late. While it is possible to get a good grip with the spurs on creosoted pine coming *up* a pole, it is a different story when a man is going *down* with a heavy load.

At the first step downward the spurs would probably have cut out, and both men would have fallen. Falling from where they were then would mean death, for they were working directly above the top of the old pole.

Dan looked across at Hubble.

"Can ye stand it the rest of the way up?" he panted anxiously.

"Yes," was the answer, the same old, unflinching desire to reach the goal asserting itself.

Again they advanced. Only two feet remained, but they were much the most difficult and most dangerous of the entire distance. The blackened pine wood curled from beneath the men's spurs; the strain was telling there. At each step the spurs slid gradually down the pole, and fresh grips must be taken every instant.

Then Hubble's knowledge of the value of organised effort came to his aid. Hitherto they had been taking the arm up one end at a time.

"Let's pull together, Dan. Ready, pull! Ready, pull!"

At each of these mad efforts eight or ten inches were gained, so that the arm was practically in place; but the

most difficult task of all remained. Although the bolt was already placed in the pole, it must be driven through the hole in the cross-arm. One of the two men must hold his end of the arm with one hand while striking. Hubble volunteered again.

"Clinch your left arm over the cross-arm," he said. "Support it on your shoulder as much as you can, and hold my left hand around the pole while I strike."

Dan did so. Hubble lifted the hand-axe from his belt, and leaned in close to sight the bolt.

"About two inches farther up. Ready, pull! Too far! Let it down! Easy. Now it's in the notch; hold it there!"

With that he swung at the bolt-head with all his might, supporting his end of the cross-arm with his left shoulder, and relying upon Dan to keep him on the pole.

The axe fell true. The bolt shot through the arm, and their hard task was over. But in swinging the heavy axe Hubble had involuntarily followed it with his weight, and his two hundred pounds were suddenly thrown upon a single spur. The strain was too great, and in an instant it had cut out of the wood, and he fell.

The whole thing occurred in a second or less. Before the bolt was fairly through the arm his spur was out, and Big Dan still grasped his left hand. When Hubble fell he swung clear of the pole and twisted Dan around, so that his spurs cut out also. Dan now found himself hanging by his left elbow to a loosely bolted cross arm, kept horizontal only by its square notch in the pole and its unbolted braces. He was twenty feet above the old pole with its rough, jagged top and its network of insulators, pins and wires; and a two-hundred-pound man was hanging to his right hand.

The sudden swing unnerved Hubble completely, and he glanced up at Dan, his face blanched with fear.

"Dan, can you hold me?" he cried.

Dan did not answer. The same question had occurred to him, and he was debating it as fast as his naturally slow brain

would allow. The situation demanded quick thought, for Dan was well-nigh exhausted by his severe exertion.

He looked down, first at Hubble, hanging there pale and motionless, and then at the top of the pole directly below him. Then he began swinging Hubble slowly back and forth toward the pole from which he had fallen. The men below saw the agony this effort brought him, for the rocking came upon his elbow, and the sharp-cornered cross-arm tore it cruelly. Wider and wider became the swing of this human pendulum, every movement torturing the man above.

Dan's face was now upturned, and the men on the ground could not see the agony expressed there. Johnson, fearful of the injury which might reach the men by reason of his folly, was trying to get some spurs adjusted to come to their help. The whole event, however, occurred in so short a space that it was over by the time he reached the first arm of the lower pole.

Dan had swung Hubble so far that the latter touched the pole with his feet. One more effort, and he caught with his knees, set his spurs in an instant, and held. Dan felt himself relieved of the weight, and knew that Hubble was safe; then he swung back without his load, his strength left him at the same instant and he dropped.

The impetus of the backward swing threw him clear of the pole below, but he struck the topmost arm upon his right hip. Johnson, who had just arrived at that point, reached him in an instant, and balanced him over the wires until the men could lower him with tackle.

They found his right leg broken at the hip, and his left arm so lacerated that the bone was visible through the torn muscles. It was six months—long, weary ones to an active man—before Dan went up a pole again.

The accident cost Johnson his place, and was the means of getting Dan the subforemanship.

CAPTURING A GRIZZLY.

BY FRED KELME.

INFORMATION which I had gathered on previous hunting-trips led me to that part of the Coast Range running through Ventura and the northern part of Los Angeles counties. It was early in June when we made our first permanent camp in the heavy timber on Mount Pinos, about seventy-five hundred feet above the level of the sea.

During the summer months about twelve thousand sheep are driven up from the dry plains of Kern to graze on Mount Pinos, and afford high living to all the bears in that part of the country. The grizzlies in the rugged ranges within a radius of thirty miles seem to know when the mutton season opens on the big mountain, and most of them go up there to grow fat during the summer vacation.

They walk into the sheep camps at night usually, select their mutton, eat their fill, and are very seldom disturbed at their meals. They pay no attention to dogs, which have discretion enough to do their barking from a respectful distance. As for the herders, they generally climb trees while grizzlies are visible, because, as they say, they are paid to herd sheep, not to fight bears.

In one of the cañons on the south side of the mountain I found the tracks of a huge bear that was raiding the sheep camps, and there I built a strong log-cabin trap, twelve feet long, four feet wide, and five feet high, inside measurement. The side logs were eighteen inches thick and the roof full twelve inches, all securely fastened with stout oak pins. The cabin rested upon a floor of heavy logs, and three of the

corners were well braced by standing trees. The door, built of two-inch planks, weighed two hundred pounds, and was raised by a rope running over a pulley and attached to a trigger projecting through the roof.

Three grizzlies came to Mount Pinos while we were there, but not one of them went near the trap, although it was baited with mutton, venison and honey. Moreover, we dragged a sheep's carcass daily from the trap and back again by a circuitous route over the mountain.

One of the bears did, indeed, call on us one night, and drove all our horses out of camp, but as he ignored the comfortable cabin erected for his special benefit, it was evident that he preferred to kill his own mutton.

It was at this place that my hired guide, fearing that I should break camp, and set him working on new traps, concocted an ingenious plan to encourage me to remain where I was. He whittled out of bark a very good model of a bear's foot, and with it made false tracks in the vicinity of the trap. Luckily I found this model hidden in some brush, and promptly discharging the ingenious liar, I left Mount Pinos and resumed work in other places, accompanied only by Moss Brewer, a young man who joined the expedition for the fun of it.

During the next three months we found the trails of many bears, saw some grizzlies face to face, built several traps and left them in the hands of the mountaineers.

For two months we made fruitless efforts to capture a big bear that had lived for many years on the Liebra Peak and destroyed hundreds of cattle. His den was a rocky hollow covered with brush, near the top of the most rugged ridge on the whole mountain. A green flat near the Castac Lake was strewn with the whitened bones of his victims, and the remains of others were to be found during an hour's tramp over almost any part of the mountain.

We hired men to chop down oak-trees thirty inches in diameter, and build enormously strong traps for that bear. Then we used hundreds of pounds of honey in vain attempts

to entice him into them. Day after day I went up among the mountain rocks to follow his trail, and every day I found the fresh imprints of his feet. Frequently the trail was so fresh that great caution was necessary to keep from coming upon the brute suddenly in dense brush.

Sometimes in the middle of the night we heard a steer bellow in terror, and the next day found the carcass of the animal partially eaten. In every instance the creature's neck had been broken by a blow from the grizzly's paw.

In his midnight raids the bear often passed the camp at no great distance, and twice he attacked and slightly wounded our horses, which were running at large. Had they been tied he would probably have killed them.

One night the bear killed a steer within a hundred and fifty yards of an unfinished trap. The next day my companion rode to a store ten miles away to get some nails, while I worked on the trap. We expected to complete the work that night and drag the carcass of the steer down to the trap, knowing that the bear would soon return for another meal.

Late in the afternoon, while I was sawing and hammering away, making a deal of noise, the grizzly came walking along a ridge within plain view and sat down by the carcass to eat his supper, not in the least disturbed by my presence or the sound of the hammer.

Presently Brewer returned, and as nothing more could be done that night, we walked up the slope toward the grizzly until within forty or fifty feet, and sat down upon a log to watch him. Although we knew we could not afford to kill him, each of us confessed afterward that we had half hoped the grizzly would resent the impertinence and compel us to shoot him. But he paid us no attention, beyond an occasional glance of curiosity, and in a few minutes went away.

The next day Brewer returned to his home and I was left alone to drag bait, watch the traps and plan new schemes for the undoing of that bear.

I had been nearly five months in the wilderness and had been ordered home by my employer a dozen times or more ;

but as I had made up my mind not to return without the bear he gradually grew tired of sending for me. For more than three months I had been conducting the hunt on my own resources, and the longer I stuck to it the more I wanted that bear.

There was good reason to hope that I might catch him when the cattle left the mountains for the winter, for then the grizzly could not find food easily and might accept my bait. Still I will admit that I was surprised as well as delighted to hear one morning that a bear had walked into one of my traps on Gleason Mountain, which had been left in the care of some mountaineers who lived in the neighbourhood. Hurrying to the place I found a famous big grizzly. He was a very angry bear when he found himself caught, and his efforts to break loose were furious.

For a full week the grizzly raged like a lunatic, refusing to touch the food that was thrown to him. Then at length he became exhausted, ceased his mad struggles, and began to eat voraciously.

Having obtained assistance, I set about the task of securing and removing him from the trap. The first thing was to make a chain fast to one of his forelegs. That job was begun at eight o'clock in the morning, but it was six in the evening before it was completed. When we had one chain securely fastened and one leg well anchored, it was a comparatively easy matter to introduce ropes and chains between the side logs and to secure his other legs, although he fought furiously during the whole operation, and chewed the chains until he splintered his teeth to stubs.

The next operation was to gag the brute so that he could not bite. The door of the trap was slightly raised, and I introduced a piece of wood, to which I had attached a length of stout cord. He seized the stick promptly, and we immediately wound the cord about his jaws, hitched it round the stick on either side, and then passed it quickly back of his ears and round his neck like a bridle. A stout rope was fastened round the bear's loins, and to this we attached a stout chain.

This done, the gag was removed from between his jaws, and bruin was ready for his journey down the mountain.

In the morning he was hauled out of the trap and bound in a heavy lumber-cart, but no team of horses in the neighbourhood could be induced to haul the bear. Finally we succeeded in securing two mules, and the trip down the mountain was finished in four days.

Every night we unchained the bear and tied him to a tree. So long as the camp-fire burned he would lie down quite still and watch it, but when it fell low he would get up, and restlessly pacing to and fro, tug at his chains, stopping now and then to seize in his arms the tree to which he was tied, and hug it fiercely. Every morning he made a determined struggle against being chained in the cart.

He became so very expert in dodging ropes, and seizing them when the loops fell over his legs, that it was never easy to lasso his paws and stretch him out. In the earlier contests of this kind the grizzly uttered angry growls, but afterward he became silent and fought savagely, keenly watching every movement of his foes, but wasting no energy in aimless struggles.

He soon learned to keep his hind-feet well beneath him, and his body close to the ground, which left only his head and fore legs to be defended from the ropes. So quick was he in the use of his paws that a dozen men could not get a rope on him while he remained in that posture of defence ; but when two or three men grasped the chains that were around his body and suddenly threw him on his back, all four of his legs were in the air at once. Then the lariats flew from all directions, and he was bound in a twinkling.

When he had finally been bound he roared in rage and his eyes were as green as emeralds. When he was calm his eyes were dark brown and not unkindly in expression. His countenance showed much intelligence.

He behaved very well until we arrived at a station, where he had a tantrum because a crowd of loungers invaded his special car, and the fool in the crowd poked the big bear

with a sharp stick to make him stand up. When I arrived on the scene the bear's eyes were blazing with wrath. I bundled the crowd out of the car, and rode with Bruin over the next division, but it was long before he was pacified.

Close acquaintance with the bear inspired me with respect for his character and admiration for his courage. He never submitted quietly to any indignity, and he would permit no stranger to lay a hand upon his chains. His strength was wonderful, and his motions very swift for such a great clumsy creature—he stood four feet one inch at the shoulder, and weighed a trifle less than a thousand pounds.

Our acquaintance reached such a stage of intimacy that he would allow me to put my hand on his chain, and would take food from my hand. He would not strike at me when I was feeding him, but at other times when I came near him he would raise his head, and utter low, angry growls.

He knew my voice, and whenever I called him by his name, Brutus, he would look at me not unkindly, and if I had nothing for him lay his head upon his paws again and go quietly to sleep; but whenever a stranger came near his cage he assumed a watchful attitude until he went away. Before we parted, we became good friends in a distant sort of way. We had learned to understand each other without becoming too familiar.

When finally caged he exhausted every means at his command to break out. Being at last convinced that he was beaten, he spent one whole day in lamentation, and then sensibly ceased his futile efforts.

Brutus is a courageous old fellow, and ought to be free to range over his native mountain. If he still regrets that he was captured I sympathise with him, for to this day I am more than half sorry myself.

A RACE FOR THE "SUNSET LIMITED."

BY WILLIAM A. BOWEN.

THE crimson glare of the semaphore at Welmer made but a faint glimmering pathway through the cold mist, and a halo shone around the light inside the office window. It was the only night office between Seguin and Schulenberg. An all-night man had to be kept there because there was an up grade over two miles long just west of the depot. Here heavy freight-trains were frequently stalled, and had to roll back and beyond the station to "take a header for the hill and force the grade."

The east-bound "Sunset Limited" was known to the trainmen as No. 101. It stopped only at county-seats or at large towns that were intersected by other roads, or at telegraph offices when signalled for special orders. This did not often occur, especially when the train was late, for its time was very fast, and delay was difficult to make up.

So when Jim Byrd, the night operator at Welmer, heard 101 slowing up without his having received any orders for her, he ran out with his lantern to see what was wanted. The big mogul engine came to a sudden stop in front of the office, with all brakes down hard, puffing and wheezing, the air-pumps working to full capacity, and the pop-valve blowing off with the sound of a tornado. The engineer leaned out of his cab, and the conductor rushed up the platform.

"Whew! She's pretty hot!" said Byrd.

"She's got to be to reach Houston on time. Worse than that, we've got to pass 83 at Schulenberg, unless you've got

orders. They told us to stop here unless you told us to pass. Got any orders for us?" This was all said by the conductor in a loud, quick voice.

"No," answered Jim. "I guess they forgot to tell me to signal you to go by, as I heard the clicker at Seguin saying for you to go ahead and make up lost time unless signalled down here."

"Why in thunder didn't they have you give us the white light then?" growled the engineer, grasping his lever and waiting for the conductor to swing on to the mail-car.

Then the great machine started off east with puffs that told of an angry engineer, and the white glare from the furnace ploughed a pathway of light far up the track.

Jim went in, sat at his desk and began to nod, with his hand on the key, so as to be easily aroused if called. The rear end lights of the departing train were still to be made out vaguely in the light fog, when Jim was roused as if by a blow. The key was conveying to him in its mysterious way the excitement thrilling from the nerves of the sender.

Jim was awake in an instant, and with horror he rapidly wrote down the following from the despatcher's office:

"Signal 101 for orders! Tell him to pass 83 at White's switch! Latter will not stop! Hold 71 at bridge siding until all others are clear! This order delayed by accident in office here."

"He didn't think 101 had had time to get here yet," thought Jim. "How she must have been running! There she goes just by the bridge siding now!"

Shocked though he was at the thought of the collision that was imminent, Jim lost no time, but ticked to headquarters the exact situation, and asked if an engine could not be sent out of Schulenberg to overtake 83, which could not be far from there. The reply was worse than the first message:

"No engine fired up at Schulenberg! Charley had stroke of paralysis at key; no one knew it until wired you. That caused delay in orders. Have doctors ready to take engine

of 71 as soon as she comes and go down to wreck! Nothing can prevent terrible collision now!"

"Can't you stop 101 at Flatonia?" asked Jim, although he knew the probable reply.

"No operator there! Perkins took suddenly sick to-day."

Jim hung out the red line for 71, rushed down to the end of the platform where he lived, awakened his wife and little boy and quickly explained the situation.

"You may be a help somehow, May," he said. "Get up and dress. John, you run and wake up the doctors! I'll be ready for 71!"

As the boy started, train 71 came rattling down the hill and stopped at the tank one hundred yards below the station. Of the brakeman who climbed down from a box car, Jim asked: "Who's pulling you to-night, Alf?"

"Riley."

"Dan Riley? What's he doing pulling *you*? I thought it was strange the way that train dashed in and stopped."

"Why, there was a lot of rush-perishable stuff, and all the big engines were out. Dan was hanging round, and they nabbed him with his high-wheeler."

Jim rushed down to the engine and shouted: "Riley, come to the office quick! Have your fireman get ready to pull out, and I'll have her uncoupled while we get orders!"

Riley told his fireman to get things ready, and then run the engine to the office. He himself raced after Jim on foot.

To the wondering crew who gathered at the office, Jim explained matters. Just as he had finished, a doctor came in, half-dressed, carrying his surgical case.

"Riley, there's no time to lose!" said Jim. "You must be off at once! Here are the other doctors—away now! Somehow I feel as if we were going to find a way out of this."

In reply, Riley turned to his fireman:

"Ned, I'm going to catch and stop 101 before she gets to White's switch! You needn't go unless you want to. I can fire and run her, too, if I have to. You doctors who

ain't afraid to die must be prepared for the most terrible trip you ever took ! There are two hundred people on those trains. The only way to save them is for me to catch that Limited—and she is almost flying to-night ! ”

As he talked he was running to his engine, the others instinctively following. Dan, Ned, and the three doctors silently got into the cab. Riley placed the doctors where they could hold on and not be in the way—one just behind him, one standing on the apron between the tender and engine and holding on to the corner at the right-hand side, and the other in the same position on the left. In the next moment the great machine started down the track, and Jim's fingers were ticking the news to headquarters.

The steam-gauge marked one hundred and sixty pounds, and Ned began feeding in more coal. Riley slowly pulled his throttle open and threw his lever forward, and the engine fairly flew forward, throwing sparks over the telegraph-wires as she seemed to gather herself for a swifter plunge into the night.

As the drivers began to spin, Riley gently pulled on his throttle and lifted his lever a notch, gradually giving her steam as the pistons began going in and out faster and faster. He stood, an incarnate force, a grim spectre in silhouette against the faint light thrown back from the headlight. As the doctors stared at that silent figure they felt an awe creep over them.

The bell was kept ringing except when Ned was shovelling coal into the red-hot throat of the iron racer, and every few seconds the shriek of the whistle warned all creatures of flesh and blood to stand aside. Before they had reached the first switch at the bridge, a little more than half a mile down the track, the engine was almost jumping along the rails in mighty throbs, so rapidly was she gaining speed under the steady, regular pull at that throttle.

Riley kept his eyes steadily on the rails. The headlight sent forward a gleam of white that seemed to part the mist into walls of dripping grey on each side of the track, and the

rails appeared like two cracks in the darkness through which came streaks of light from unknown depths.

He pulled his lever up to the three-quarter notch, drew his throttle nearly to the last cog, and looked at the gauge. It showed one hundred and eighty pounds, and the pop-valve was roaring.

The time was not yet ten o'clock. Many farmhouses showed dim lamps in their windows, and doors flew open as people heard the clanging bell, the shrieking whistle, and the blast of the pop-valve, and remembered that the Limited had just gone past.

By the time the engine reached Big Sandy bridge, the side-rods were going so fast that they looked as if moving only up and down, and the drivers appeared like gigantic black wheels of solid iron.

To keep upright the doctors clung with all their strength, and Ned reeled and lurched every time he shovelled coal. Then over the glare from the opened mouth, the great mantle of black that was streaming back would serve as a reflector to illumine the faces and forms of the men who were venturing against many chances of sudden death.

As the engine tore across the bridge and began racing up the grade, Riley and Ned both strained their eyes, for at the end of that grade was a curve, and then a two-mile stretch of level track across a prairie. Ned leaned far out of the cab to gaze, and Riley tried to look across the front of his engine away ahead on Ned's side. Each was looking for the same thing.

Suddenly Ned pointed, jumped down and began shovelling coal in furiously. Riley pulled his throttle out another cog, and the machine made another appalling leap. Ned had pointed at the two red end lights on the Limited sleeper, but they were barely visible, and the Limited was going at the rate of more than fifty miles an hour. The Southern Pacific has one of the best ballasted and smoothest tracks in the country, but it was to be tested that night.

The pursuers had already covered five miles, and must

catch and stop that flying train before she reached White's switch, which was now hardly fourteen miles ahead of Riley's engine.

Coal was bouncing all over the cab floor; the pick and the shovel could not be kept in place. Riley had to stand up and hold to his lever and throttle, ready to put on brakes. Ned had almost to crawl when he shovelled coal, and half of each shovelful would spill. The big oil-can had jumped from its rack and was dancing over the floor. The monkey-wrench jolted out of the place beside the boiler, dropped hard on the toe of a doctor, and went tumbling out upon the road-bed.

The roar of the escaping steam, the thunder of the wheels, and the clanging of the bell made it impossible for any one to speak audibly except in a shout.

"By the way those lights went sailing round that curve 101 must be making fifty miles!" roared Ned.

"Yes," replied Riley, "and we've got to beat that a good deal! She'll have to slow up some going through Flatonian! It'll be mighty risky, but we'll have to strike those switches just the way we're going now—or faster!"

"Well, I'm not afraid, except for that dump that changes so quickly into a cut and then to a curve just beyond the depot!" said Ned. "We're doing considerably over fifty miles, I guess!"

"I just counted seventy-three joints we rolled over in twenty seconds by my watch!" shouted Riley. "That gives us nearly seventy-two miles! I'm going to make her spread herself when we strike the next level and down-grade piece of track!"

Smooth as was the track, with its rock ballast and heavy new steel rails, the flying engine was swaying from side to side and plunging up and down furiously.

"When we catch them, Ned," said Riley, "you hold the throttle and I'll get down in front and couple on the sleeper, step on it, and pull the air; then you reverse her and jam on our wind for all it's worth!"

"No, Dan," replied Ned, "it's going to be a ticklish thing to get out there and do that. I'll attend to that part of it. No one can handle this engine the way you can. I'd make her slide, most likely; but you can put on all her holding-back force and not strain a watch-spring."

Over bridges, across valleys, through fields, by hamlets whose gaping people stared with wonder and fright, by section-houses that passed like great, silent birds swiftly flying away from them, the engine clanged on, racking the five men who thought continually on the terrible possibilities before them. The slightest mishap might prove fatal.

But the risk must be taken to save the unconscious passengers on the trains that were rushing toward collision.

The plan was arranged. Ned was to get on the cow-catcher and have the great draw-bar ready to put into the jaw of the sleeper coupler. Then, unless he failed, he was to jump on the platform of the sleeper, while Riley kept the bar in place until Ned could pin it in. Then Ned was to pull the air-cord on the rear of the sleeper, and Riley was to shut off steam and put on his jam-brakes and blow four quick blasts as signals of distress.

Never did the inhabitants of quiet Flatonia see such a sight as that great engine tearing through the town and across streets, never slacking, with whistle screaming and bell clanging, the engine rocking and reeling over switch-frogs and street intersections. People went out in the streets and collected in groups, and spoke in hushed voices of wonder and fear, for they knew the "Sunset Limited" had passed through not more than a minute before, slowing up on its way through the town.

The speed of Riley's engine grew more terrific as it reached the straight piece of track, down grade, beyond the town. His plan was to make lightning speed down this to the level stretch four miles beyond, at the end of which he expected to catch 101 just before she reached White's switch.

Ned knew what was coming. He renewed the fire, crawled out on the foot-board, grasped the hand-rods, and went on

his hands and knees along the side of the leaping engine. There were the two red lights down the track. Now came the trial! All that had been done before seemed child's play to what lay before them now.

Ned pulled his cap down over his ears, and slowly drew himself along until he reached the boiler-head. As the engine was steadying itself after a struggle and heavy plunge, he dropped on his stomach to the platform of the cowcatcher. Firmly planting his feet between the timbers of the pilot, he waited.

They were just behind 101 now, and gradually creeping up on her. Riley strained his eyes to catch Ned's every movement. The pursuing engine seemed to spurt right up to the sleeper. Ned lifted the heavy bar. The sleeper lurched, the engine pitched and rocked, and the train seemed to be trying to get away. It crept ahead and out of reach. Ned had dropped the bar. He seemed agonised. The doctors clung and stared; it seemed to them terrible—that failure!

But Riley still hoped. He did not increase his speed, feeling that 101 had simply taken one of those unaccountable spurts made by trains at times, and that Ned needed a moment to become cool and calm. Two seconds passed. Again the engine began to creep up on the flying train, and soon the cowcatcher was under the sleeper.

Now! Ned painfully raised the great bar higher and placed it in the jaw of the coupler. Riley saw it fall, and was on the point of putting on a little more steam to keep it in place when he noticed that Ned seemed faint and suffering. In the glare of the headlight his face was as pale as death. But he had lifted the bar, and slowly he put it in place, crawled up on the platform and dropped a pin into the bar. Then he staggered up to the air-cord and pulled.

Instantly he was flattened out against the end of the car by the suddenness with which the train checked its speed. Riley had shut off steam as he saw Ned pull the cord, and had put on his jam-brakes.

The sudden pulling back of the train, followed by those four shrieks of the whistle, told the amazed engineer of 101 that something awful, and never before known in his experience, was happening! So he, too, shut off steam and put on his brakes.

In a few moments the train was at a standstill, both engines puffing impatiently, with their pop-valves blowing off until one could hardly hear any other noise. The crew of 101 rushed back and stood in speechless astonishment!

"Don't ask questions! Back quickly, and let's get on White's switch!" exclaimed Riley, for they had run by the switch.

They were not slow in backing up into it, but the train had barely cleared the main track and the brakeman had hardly time to throw the switch when 83 flashed in sight around the curve, and dashed by with its three baggage- and mail-cars and five coaches and sleepers.

Then Riley sprang up to the rear platform of 101 and lifted the head of his fallen fireman. In a dead faint! That strong man! But his boot! For the heavy draw-bar had fallen on that foot, jamming it between the timbers of the cowcatcher, and breaking the bones. Yet he had held himself to the rescue till it was done!

"That's all right," said Ned, when he came to and they praised him; but the foot kept him in the hospital for five months.

As for Riley, the newspapers greatly disgusted him by dubbing him hero.

"Shucks!" he said. "Makes me sick! Done my duty, and done no more! But Ned was dead game, sure!"

Still, from New Orleans to San Francisco, that race after the "Sunset Limited" is talked of by railway men and travellers.

VIXEN AND THE PANTHER.

BY C. G. D. ROBERTS.

HORSE-FLESH as an article of diet is not in high repute in this part of the world. The panther, however, has no deep-seated prejudice against it; but probably there are few panthers in a generation that could place their paws on their hearts and declare that they had had an opportunity to indulge their fondness for such diet.

In the little Aroostook camp where I worked the winter I was sixteen years old there arrived an unusual kind of visitor. It was nothing less than a fine colt. Now it is seldom such a thing happens in camp, for a mare who is to be a mother is generally left at home in snugger quarters than the camp affords.

The mother of this unlooked-for visitor was a bay mare called Vixen. She had fine intelligence and great working qualities, but she was bad-tempered to all but her master, who thought the world of her. Just now she was in a worse temper than usual, for she thought her foal ought to be in more civilised quarters than those of the camp stables.

The mare and her baby, however, were cared for with a solicitude which should have softened her heart. It was spring weather, warm in the sun at midday, and besides the roomy corner of the stable which had been fitted up for my lady's accommodation, the men had built her a wide pen in the yard, on the south side of the stable wall, where she could sun her offspring at all convenient seasons. The snow was trampled down hard in this enclosure, and then liberally spread with straw; and altogether Vixen had very little to complain of.

One day, in the early afternoon, when the men had gone far off to their chopping, the cook and I found ourselves alone in camp.

A week or so before this I had had the misfortune to sink my axe deep into my left foot. The cut was a bad one, and since the accident I had not been able to walk a step. But this particular day was unusually warm and sunny, and as I had been shut up in camp some time and was eager for a breath of fresh air, the cook early in the afternoon took me up in his arms and carried me to the edge of the clearing, ten or fifteen rods away. Here I could sit on a big log in the sun, with the thick woods at my back to shelter me from the wind.

I was sitting there very still, enjoying the warm sun and the clear air after my irksome confinement, when some slight sound attracted my attention. Glancing toward the camp, my eye caught a glimpse of a lank, tawny creature stealthily creeping between the trees on the other edge of the clearing. His belly dragged the snow, so low did he crouch. He had not seen me, and he took the utmost pains to escape observation. He was eyeing Vixen and her foal over the low fence of their pen, and was deciding on the tactics best calculated to give him colt for supper.

He crept slowly round the clearing, unobserved, as he thought, till he had the stable between himself and the pen; then he left his cover. But he had underrated Vixen's keenness. Her eye had been upon him from the first, and the moment he disappeared from her view she set up an excited whinny, which was intended to summon help from the camp. She did not like the looks of the stranger, and she was uneasy as soon as her eye was no longer upon him.

The cook heard her call. He ran to the door and took a glance toward the pen. The mare looked all right, the colt was prancing about merrily, and there was no sign of danger or trouble that he could see; but before he could go back to his work I shouted to him and told him what was the matter.

Without waiting for more than a glimpse of the panther, the cook started on the run for the chopping where the men were at work. I knew he had gone for his gun, the only one in camp, which Jean Batiste had taken with him after dinner. I had to stay there, helpless, on my log.

Seeing no help come from the camp, Vixen took her colt to the middle of the pen, and stood with it right under her nose, while she kept a ceaseless watch on all sides. The colt seemed to realise, from its mother's alarm, that there was danger astir, and huddled itself apprehensively together. It followed its mother's every motion, remaining close by her head.

Presently round the corner of the stable crept the panther, a tawny shadow, flat on the snow. The moment he saw through the openings of the fence that the eye of the mare was upon him, he bounded to the top of the fence and made one bold spring for his prey; but the mare was no less lightning-swift than himself. At the first glimpse of him she had whirled so that her heels were toward the enemy, and had waited in a crouching attitude that one might have taken to indicate the extreme of terror. As the panther sprang, her iron heels met him with a thud that forced out of him an involuntary snarling gasp, and he fell against the pen fence. In an instant he flashed over the fence and lay down in the snow to recover his breath.

After a short rest the panther, deciding to try a new mode of attack, leaped over the fence just out of reach of Vixen's heels, and darted straight across the pen; then swifter almost than thought, he doubled and sprang at the colt; but quick as he was, the mare's heels were there to meet him, and he was knocked in a heap against the fence. He didn't wait for another such greeting, but slipped over and lay down again on the snow in his old place at the corner of the stable.

Instead of making another direct attack, the panther next rose to the fence, and thence sprang to the roof of the stable where he crouched down and snarled fiercely.

The colt was still the object of his heart's desire. The moment he mounted to the roof Vixen had withdrawn to the farther edge of the pen, and now she stood hunched together, with her head turned backward, so as to let no movement of her foe escape her eye.

From his superior height the panther fancied that he could escape her heels and reach the mare's back. Then the battle would be his, and afterwards he could see to the colt at his leisure. It was well devised, but this was his first attempt to dine upon horse-flesh, and he knew not the omnipresent faculty of a horse's heels. It was upon this rock that his scheme went to pieces.

As he sprang from his vantage-ground, the impetus of his attack was tremendous and almost irresistible. Vixen almost stood on her head, and her heels met him fair in the stomach, so that he shrieked under the blow; but the mere momentum of his leap overcame the resistance of Vixen's hoofs to the extent that he reached her back, and bore the brave mare to the ground with his descending force. She nimbly recovered herself, however, and shook him off, and by this time the cook came running toward the pen with his gun cocked, expecting to see the panther at her throat. But no; there was little fight left in him. He looked very sick as he tried to crawl out of the pen, and the cook was on the point of finishing him with a charge of buckshot, but Vixen intervened.

Leaving her colt, she darted forward and tore his neck fiercely with her powerful teeth. The beast rolled over on his back, screaming madly; and as Vixen trampled him down with her front hoofs, he doubled and sank his claws into her neck and shoulders.

There for a moment he snarled and clawed, while the brave mare's neck streamed with blood, and the cook sought a chance for a shot. But Vixen's plungings gave him no opportunity. It was plain to the cook that the mare would kill her adversary in a minute or two more, but he dreaded lest meanwhile she should be seriously injured.

With some misgivings as to the reception he might have

from Vixen herself, though he was going to her assistance, he dropped his gun, drew his long knife and jumped into the pen. As an opportunity showed itself he drove the knife with all his force straight through the beast's backbone, dividing the spine. And the lank carcass straightened out on the snow.

The brave mare stood over her fallen adversary and whinnied triumphantly; and she made it plain to the cook that she appreciated his assistance. Then the cook got water in his dish-pan and washed her wounds. The dressing of them he left for her master to see to on his return; but ever afterwards Vixen was as gentle to the cook as toward her owner, though with the rest of mankind she would have naught to do.

JASPER FELTON'S REWARD.

BY WILLIAM MURRAY GRAYDON.

NEW CUMBERLAND is a pretty rural village lying directly across the Susquehanna from the big smoky town of Steelton, whose immense iron and steel works have few equals in the State of Pennsylvania. For many years a score or more of New Cumberland's inhabitants have been employed at Steelton, and until a few months ago these men went to their daily work in small rowboats, pulling a mile and a quarter across the river early each morning, and returning at six o'clock every evening. This plan had other disadvantages than loss of time and hard labour. When the river was very high or clogged with drift ice, the men were compelled to tramp two miles up the shore, cross the bridge to Harrisburg, and then take the electric cars to Steelton, returning by the same route. They were sturdy fellows, and did not mind it much. There was always a remedy at hand, since they might at any time move their families across the river. Some few, weary of the drudgery and frequent expense, chose this alternative. But the majority refused to exchange their pretty vine-clad cottages, with the accompanying boon of health and pure air, for the smoke and dirt of the squalid town.

Dan Lucas, a thrifty lad of seventeen, was the first to conceive a plan by which he could benefit both himself and his neighbours. It was a very simple plan, and it is surprising that no one had thought of it long before. Dan was then employed in the village saw-mill, but a few months before he had filled the post of engineer and fireman on a small steamer ten miles up the river. The steamer belonged to a contractor named

Jonathan Long, and was used for hauling sand flats and stone barges to and fro.

Dan did not at once put his plan into execution. He kept on working and saving money, but meanwhile he made a confidant of Jasper Felton, a lad of his own age. Jasper was also employed in the saw-mill, and the scanty pittance he earned was almost the sole support of him and his widowed mother. Mr. Felton had been dead ten years.

Dan first offered his companion a partnership in the enterprise. This had to be declined, however, for lack of funds. Then he made a proposition of a different nature, which Jasper accepted with delight and gratitude.

Dan had laid a little money aside from his previous situation, and in July his total savings amounted to twenty pounds. A few days later the saw-mill shut down for repairs, and the two lads immediately went up the river to see Jonathan Long. The contractor happened to have a small steamboat which was somewhat out of repair. She was called the *Dart*, and was twenty-two feet long. He agreed to sell her to Dan for fifteen pounds, and to fix her up and paint her for three pounds additional.

A week later the *Dart* arrived at New Cumberland in all her glory, and great was the excitement and delight of the villagers when they learned that they could now make regular trips to and from Steelton on this trim little craft. Dan attended to the engine, while Jasper, for his services as pilot, was to receive one-fourth of the gross receipts. The fare was fixed at twopence each way, no reduction being allowed for round trips.

The confidence of the boys was not overrated. The enterprise proved a success from the start. The ironworkers, with few exceptions, forsook their row-boats for a safer and speedier passage in the *Dart*. The boys found it wise to sell them weekly tickets at a slight reduction. Moreover, the women folks of the village took advantage of the steam ferry to make frequent shopping excursions to town, while picnickers and fishing-parties came over to New Cumberland, and tramped up the creek or over the hills. The news spread among the

country folk, too, and on market mornings the farmers would drive into the village, tie up their teams, and cross in the steamer with their baskets of produce. This saved them the expense of bridge toll, and a long journey besides.

At the close of the first week the *Dart* was making hourly trips between six in the morning and six in the evening. Jasper's share of the receipts for the second week was three times as much as he had earned in the saw-mill. The third week yielded still more, and he was able to provide his mother with many little comforts that she had long needed, besides laying a few shillings away. Meanwhile he paid his *pro rata* share of necessary expenses, except that of coal, which Dan had voluntarily assumed in the original agreement. The river was constantly falling, and though there was always a fair depth of water even in its lowest stage, the boys wisely marked out a well-defined channel by means of floating buoys, and dredged it free of loose stones and sand-bars. They also built a movable landing-wharf on each shore, and covered the *Dart* with a neat canvas awning that protected the passengers from rain and sun.

Each week added to the traffic and the profits, and Jasper began to dream of moving his mother to a snug little cottage, with a garden and orchard attached, on which he had recently set his eye. Dan's earnings, of course, stood to Jasper's in the ratio of four to one. He was elated by his prosperity, and by the constantly increasing array of figures in his bank-book. He began to put on airs, and in the evenings he would sit in the village store and listen gravely to the conversation of his elders.

But too much prosperity is not good for a man—or a boy, either. In Dan's case the result was selfishness. He grew avaricious and grasping. The more he got, the more he wanted. Something rankled in his mind, and for very shame he tried at first to stifle it. Finally he said to Jasper: "Look here, I've been thinking of something for a good while. It's not fair that you should have a quarter of all the earnings. I'm the owner of the boat, and you're only hired, you know. From the first of September I'll give you a pound a week, and if you don't want to take it, I'll get somebody for less money."

Jasper's golden air-castles tumbled down. He expostulated mildly with Dan, and pleaded that the agreement was binding. But Dan was not to be shaken from his resolve. A pound a week or retirement, that was the long and the short of it.

In his heart Jasper did not blame Dan so very much for exercising his right of ownership in the *Dart*; only he wished that the twenty-five per cent. basis had never been made; a pound a week would have satisfied him then. Now it was dropping from a pinnacle of affluence. He took counsel with his mother, and fortified by her wise advice and consoling words, he resolved to make the best of the situation.

The first of September came, and with it came a severe blow to the owner of the *Dart*—a punishment, perhaps, for his broken faith. Abram Hargest, a well-to-do storekeeper of New Cumberland, concluded that Dan was making more money than was becoming in a lad of his age. So he purchased a steamboat and started a rival line to Steelton. The *Cormorant*—that was the name of the new boat—was half as large again as the *Dart*, and was much more comfortable. It made about the same speed, and the fare was the same. In charge of it were two lads, Nick Cooper and Tom Kennet. They had no love for Dan or Jasper, and did all they could to injure the popularity of the *Dart* and draw patronage to their employer.

The sympathies of the villagers were probably with the owners of the *Dart*, but they could not afford to make an enemy of such an influential man as Abram Hargest. So the *Cormorant* did fairly well from the start, and Dan and Jasper found their traffic decreased by one-half. The latter was at first none the worse off, since he was now working for fixed wages. But presently even his meagre pound was threatened with curtailment. One by one the regular patrons of the *Dart* dropped off, and by the end of September the situation was serious.

The landing-wharves of the two steamers were but a few yards apart on both sides of the river. The *Cormorant* now made better time than its rival, for at considerable labour and expense Abram Hargest had dredged out a direct and artificial channel.

It rained hard and steadily during most of the first week in October, and the Susquehanna became a swollen and turbid flood. The next week was clear, but the river was still high and swift when Dan and Jasper met at the wharf early on Wednesday morning. The former's face was clouded with anger and vexation.

"Have you heard the news?" he demanded sullenly. "Hargest has put the fare down a halfpenny each way."

"That's a mean trick," exclaimed Jasper. "We'll have to do the same, I guess."

"No, we won't, either," declared Dan obstinately. "We're hardly earning anything as it is. I wish I could get square with that old fellow. I'll have to cut your wages next week unless we pick up more trade."

Jasper's face clouded, but he made no reply, for fear of aggravating Dan's irritable mood. "I can't support mother on a pound a week," he said to himself. "I guess I'll have to throw up this job and go back to the saw-mill."

In moody silence the boys set about building the fire. A few yards up the river, at the *Cormorant's* landing, Nick Cooper and Tom Kennet were engaged on similar work. The *Dart* carried six passengers on her first trip, while the rival steamer was packed to overflowing. There was about the same proportion of traffic on the two following round trips. The weight of coins in Dan's pocket was very light and his heart felt correspondingly heavy, but not so heavy, perhaps, as Jasper's.

At fifteen minutes past nine o'clock both steamers lay on the Steelton side. Each had just blown her five-minute whistle. The *Cormorant* was already half filled by a bevy of chattering girls bound on a chestnutting excursion to the York Hills. Other passengers quickly filled up the remaining seats—three gunners, with dogs and game-bags, a pair of urchins with a rusty fowling-piece between them, a sunburnt farmer, and two plump market women with empty baskets. At the last minute came Abram Hargest, satchel in hand. He had been absent on business for several days. He hurried down the bank, and

glanced contentedly at the other steamer as he stepped on board his own. There was barely room for him.

As yet not a single passenger for the *Dart*. Time was up, too. Dan and Jasper glanced meaningly at each other. With a shrill echoing whistle the *Cormorant* moved slowly across the yellow flood. She was packed to overflowing; dangerously so, since her gunwales were but a few inches above the water.

"We may as well start," muttered Dan, as he walked sullenly to the boiler. Just then a shout was heard, and a man ran down the bank and tumbled on board. He was about thirty years old, with a handsome and attractive face. He wore a shooting suit, and had a gun with him. The boys were on fairly intimate terms with Mr. Torrance, for he was one of their steadfast passengers. They knew that he was interested in a large iron mill a mile above Steelton, and they realised vaguely that he was well off.

The *Dart* moved out from shore, slowly at first, then with quicker revolutions of the stern paddle-wheel.

"The same old story, I see," remarked Mr. Torrance, as he glanced at the *Cormorant*. "Don't despair, my lads; pluck will win the race yet. Even as things go now you must be making a snug living, and dividing a pretty fair sum at the end of the week. How about that cottage, Jasper? Are you in possession yet?"

Jasper was silent. "He's working for regular wages now," said Dan aggressively. "I pay him a pound a week. I could get somebody for less, but I'd rather have Jasper."

"I thought there was a fixed basis of percentage between you," remarked Mr. Torrance, with an inflection of surprise.

"Yes," admitted Dan; "but it wasn't binding. This is my boat, and I ought to have most of the profits."

"Oh!" said Mr. Torrance; and then he was silent for several minutes.

Meanwhile the *Dart* had gained on her rival, and was now abreast of her, though separated by the space of fifty yards. The *Cormorant* had the lower and straighter track. As both steamers reached mid-channel a sharp splitting noise was

heard. Then the *Cormorant* swung suddenly to one side, and began to drift helplessly.

"Look!" cried Jasper. "The paddle-wheel has broken at the hub. It's all fallen apart. They'll soon be in the rapids if we don't help them. Crowd on all steam, Dan. We'll catch up the *Cormorant*, and tow her to shore."

"I guess we won't," replied Dan. "I wouldn't lift a finger to save that mean old fellow. The passengers are in no danger. If they drift down stream a mile or two and get badly scared, they'll know which boat to travel in after this. Nothing better could have happened for us."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," cried Jasper indignantly. "The passengers *are* in danger, and you know it. The boat is almost level with the water now, and the minute she strikes a rock, or gets in among those waves, she'll fill and go to the bottom."

"Nonsense," sneered Dan. "They have poles on board. Why don't they use them?"

"Poles are of no account in this swift current," cried Jasper. "The water is too deep, anyway."

As he spoke he gave the tiller a fierce twist, and the *Dart* headed obediently down the stream.

"Stop that!" shouted Dan. Throwing himself upon Jasper, he wrenched him away from the tiller and pushed him backward over one of the seats. Then he quickly swung the *Dart* toward shore again, and seizing a heavy stick, he stood on the defensive.

Jasper rose, quivering with passion and indignation. He clinched his fists and took a step forward. Then he stopped, for Dan's club was swinging viciously in a half circle. Mr. Torrance looked sternly but passively on. Perhaps he did not clearly understand the situation, and was uncertain with whom to side.

At all events, Jasper had not exaggerated the danger. The *Cormorant* was in grave peril. Already she was less than half a mile from the rapids, and drifting toward them at high speed. A blow from a hidden rock or a plunge through leaping waves would surely swamp her. The passengers were not blind to

their impending fate. The men shouted and waved their hats appealingly at the *Dart*. The women and girls screamed at the top of their voices. Guns were fired in air, and the steamer's whistle made a shrieking but futile din. The engine puffed and snorted as though the paddle-wheel was still churning the muddy waves. Excited knots of people were now visible on both shores. Here and there small boats put out, but there was no likelihood of their reaching the helpless vessel in time to transfer the passengers.

Jasper noted all these things at a glance, and his mind was swiftly made up. He must do his duty at all hazards.

"Will you turn the steamer down stream?" he demanded.

"No!" shouted Dan, twirling his stick with added force. "Keep back or I'll hit you."

Jasper made no further appeal. He rushed swiftly to the attack, and received one stinging blow on the shoulder. The lads grappled, and the next instant Dan was sprawling on the floor half a dozen feet from the tiller. Jasper was surprised at his own strength. He quickly picked up the stick, and swung the *Dart* down stream. The act was greeted by hoarse cheering from the *Cormorant*.

Dan pulled himself to his feet, white with passion. He did not renew the battle, but ran instantly toward the boiler.

"You may have the tiller!" he cried exultantly. "I'll fix you. I'll put out the fire." The next instant he had the furnace door open, and was bending over it, poker in hand.

With a quick glance Mr. Torrance mentally measured the distance between the *Cormorant* and the head of the rapids. Then he turned to Jasper and whispered sharply: "Come, my lad, I'll help you. There's no time to lose."

As the words were uttered Jasper dropped the tiller and sprang forward. Mr. Torrance followed at his heels. They were quick about it, for they had hold of Dan before he could either rake the glowing coals into the pan or turn off the steam. He struggled like a young panther—biting, scratching, and snarling. Mr. Torrance was somewhat of an athlete. He brought his muscles into full play, and pinned the

prisoner down, while Jasper ran back for a bit of rope. Dan was speedily bound hand and foot and dragged out of the way. He struggled vainly to escape from his bonds, and howled all manner of threats and imprecations. His captors paid no attention to him. Jasper glanced at the steam-gauge and threw fresh coal on the fire.

"Run to the tiller," cried Mr. Torrance. "Trust me with the boiler. I know something about them. There's barely time to save the *Cormorant*; but not a second to lose."

Jasper obeyed without a word. The *Dart* sped rapidly down mid-channel, trembling from bow to stern under the violent throbbing of the engine and the dizzy revolutions of the paddle-wheel. The distance lessened to twenty yards—fifteen—ten. But the rapids were now frightfully close. The helpless steamer was drifting toward them stern first. Her passengers were shrieking wildly. Far up in the bow stood two or three watchful men holding a coil of heavy rope.

Now the boats were but five yards apart. Suddenly one end of the rope whizzed across the gap and was cleverly caught by Mr. Torrance. Gathering in the spare line, he ran to the stern and made fast the hempen link. Jasper swung the tiller, and the staunch little *Dart* headed diagonally up stream. A moment of anxious suspense followed. Then the *Cormorant* was checked on the very brink of the rapids, and after a quivering jerk or two, she followed in the wake of her conductor.

The rescued passengers cheered themselves hoarse, and shrill responses floated over the water from each shore. The connecting rope bore the strain well as the *Dart* ploughed her way against the swirling current. It was slow work, but in something over ten minutes the *Cormorant* was brought safely alongside her landing, and the passengers scrambled out.

The *Dart* ran ashore a few yards above. Dan's bonds were cut, and he jumped sullenly out on the beach, followed by Jasper and Mr. Torrance. They were quickly surrounded by a curious and admiring crowd, who did not exactly understand what had happened out on the river. Dan tried

to sneak away, fearful of rough treatment when the truth should come out. Mr. Torrance caught his arm and checked him.

"I want to buy the *Dart*," he said sternly. "I will give what you paid for it."

"I won't sell," snarled Dan.

"Yes, you will," replied Mr. Torrance. "You are foolish to refuse. You will get no such offer again. Think a minute," he added, in a whisper. "Is it likely that a single person will ever patronise you in future? Your dastardly actions can't be concealed."

Dan turned pale. "I'll take twenty pounds," he said sullenly.

In the presence of the crowd Mr. Torrance drew his pocket-book and extracted ten pounds in notes. "This is all I have with me," he said. "It will do to seal the contract. You shall have the balance to-day."

Dan took the notes, and quickly disappeared while he had the chance.

Mr. Torrance turned to Jasper. "The *Dart* is yours," he said. "No, don't thank me. The money is only a loan. You can pay it back out of your earnings whenever convenient."

Jasper was speechless with joy. His good fortune seemed too amazing to be true. He wished that he could slip away, for Mr. Torrance was now telling the crowd the true story of the *Cormorant's* rescue.

Abram Hargest jostled his way forward and clapped a hand on the lad's shoulder. "You're a hero, Jasper," he exclaimed. "What do you say to going into partnership with me? I'll take you on equal shares. We'll use the *Cormorant* for the ferry, and hire the *Dart* to picnics and fishing-parties. I mean fair, Torrance," he added. "It's a good offer."

"Yes, I think it is," replied Mr. Torrance. "Accept it by all means, Jasper."

So the partnership was formed then and there, and ratified by the cheers of the crowd.

Dan is back at his old place with Jonathan Long. He found that New Cumberland air did not agree with him,

IN YOUTH'S PRIME.



"WHITE MAN NO SHOOT!" HE SHOUTED. "ME HIM FRIEND!"

IN YOUTHS PRIME.



A GENTLEMAN RANKER.

BY G. MANVILLE FENN.

I.

“YOU are in debt, sir, again? You always were in debt since you were a boy, and you always will be in debt. Perfect disgrace to our family, as I always told your father you would be; but my brother always was a fool, spoiling you as he did, and his last piece of idiocy was letting you enter the army.”

“Look here, uncle, insult and abuse me as much as you like, but I won’t stand here and let you say such things against my dead father.”

“What’s that! How dare you! Be off, then. I didn’t ask you to come here, and you wouldn’t have come now if it hadn’t been to beg. I’d kick you out at once, old and weak as I am, if you hadn’t said that and shown that you have some little respect left for your father. But I say it again: he was a fool.”

“Uncle!” cried the young man passionately.

“Silence, sir! How dare you! I’m in my own house, and I shall say what I like. He knew what a spendthrift you were; and if you wanted to get into the army he ought to have let you enlist and work your way up. Why didn’t he do that?”

"Because I was a gentleman, sir," said the young man haughtily.

"A gentleman! Do gentlemen spend all their time over-running the constable and plundering poor tradespeople of the goods they can't pay for? Bah! Don't tell me! You have behaved like a scoundrel."

"But, uncle——"

"Will you let me speak, sir! I have helped you again and again when I thought you were honest."

"Oh, this is unbearable, sir!"

"I said, while I thought you were honest; but this last act of yours is utter roguery, and I am going to do my duty by you. I'll expose you, sir, and I don't know but what I will send for the police. Why, it's almost as bad as forgery!"

"What, when I shall inherit my aunt's property at twenty-five—in six months?"

"Yes, sir. I say it is downright robbery, sir. You've engaged to pay these people so many hundred pounds in a week, and you have owned to me just now that you haven't so many hundred pence. Isn't that the case?"

"Yes, uncle," said the young man sadly; "but I shall have plenty in six months."

"But you haven't got the money now."

"No, uncle, and I shall be utterly disgraced if you don't help me."

"Then be disgraced, sir," cried the old man furiously. "You deserve to be."

"You don't mean that, uncle? And pray don't be so violent."

"What, sir! I'll be as violent as I please."

"But you know how weak you are," said the young man earnestly, as he gazed at the swollen veins and quivering face before him. "You know what Dr. Edwards said."

"What, you insult me with that, sir! Yes, I do know what Dr. Edwards said—that if I had another of those apoplectic fits it might mean my death. And that's what you want, sir. I know you. You say to yourself that the sooner the better, and then you will have a chance to make my money fly.

That's why you have come, and it's nothing better than murder. Curse you, you unnatural dog! I'll have the police to you. You shall not have a shilling. Here, I'll have no more of it!" And starting from the seat he had occupied, the speaker caught up the big crutch-handled Malacca cane from where it leaned against the side of the easy chair, and using it as a support he limped painfully towards the bell. "Yes," he roared hoarsely, "you have come to kill me, and I'll have in the police!"

"No, no, uncle; this is madness. Sit down, pray, or you will have another fit."

"Stand back—dog!—scoundrel!" cried the old man furiously. "Let it come, but I will do my duty first—what I ought to have done when your father died. Take that—and that—and that!" he gasped, as he struck at the young man blow after blow with the cane, the first of which took effect across the side of his face, making the blood rise in a passion of insulted dignity, so that everything else was forgotten. There was a short sharp struggle for the cane, a heavy fall, and as he hurled the cane across the room, the young man stood looking down at his old relative's quivering features, and listened to the hoarse stertorous breathing, the passion dying out on the instant, as he went down on one knee to loosen the tight cravat, and literally gasped,

"Great Heavens! What have I done?"

Half mad with excitement, Frank Lake hurried out of his uncle's house, sprang into the first cab he saw, and sat staring, wild-eyed and strange, straight before him, till he started violently and made as if to spring out again, alarmed by a raucous voice which breathed something in his ear.

"Ah!" he gasped, as he sank back. "The doctor's! Drive fast."

"Right, sir. Any doctor's?"

"No, no, I didn't mean that. The Cardigan Club."

The little door in the cab roof was clapped down, and as he gave his horse a flick, the driver grinned and chuckled to himself.

"Drunk and incapable. Pubs all shut, being church time ; but he can get more there. A doctor would have been best for him. But 'tain't my business. Get along, Juniper ! You needn't try to say your prayers because it's Sunday."

Ten minutes later he drew up at the door of the great military club. The fare sprang out, and was half up the steps when he recalled his scattered wits, thrust his hand into his pocket, took out the first coin, stepped back, and thrust it into the driver's hand, and as the man drove away with the hearty "Thankye !" that had just parted from his lips he muttered,

"Well, he is a gentlemen, after all."

How the rest of the day passed Frank Lake hardly knew. He had some recollection afterwards of dining alone and drinking heavily, while hardly anything solid touched his lips. And all the while there was a strange buzzing sensation in his brain as he went over again and again the circumstances of his position.

Unintentionally he had given the touch which had destroyed the tottering life of his old relative, and as a culmination to the horrible disgrace that he had brought upon himself in connection with his money matters, there would be the inquest and exposure, and—oh, it was all maddening—maddening !

"I can't face it !" he groaned, as he sat in the deserted smoking-room. The cigar he held in his trembling hands fell upon the carpet, and then—it seemed to be directly after—he was seated in the night train, being whirled away somewhere, he knew not where, only one idea occupying his mind, and that was that all was over, and that he was flying from disgrace.

It was a long and dreary ride, with more stoppages than usual, and later on, at Peterborough, there was a halt of about two hours, till the coming in of another train by the eastern route bringing in the mail bags. And then on and on again in a third-class compartment of which he was the only occupant, where he sat fixed of eye, his face, seen by the dim yellow light of the lamp, haggard and strained of feature, as

he seemed to be watching and counting the telegraph posts which grew gradually plainer in the grim light of a rainy dawn.

At last he seemed to wake up into action, and lowered the window to admit the cool fresh air, as the train slackened speed and drew up at a platform, and he heard the porters cry "York! Any luggage?"

He made no reply, and the porter stared at him curiously, and repeated his question in a different tone:

"Any luggage, sir?"

"No," was the reply, and the porter continued his stare, and then exchanged glances with one of his fellows, before busying himself over some trunks belonging to a better-class passenger who was so burdened.

Then after its brief stay the engine uttered its shriek and steamed on due north—Frank Lake standing motionless, watching it till it disappeared.

"What do you think of him?" said the porter who had saluted him.

"Oh, I don't know," was the reply.

"Open to a bet?" said the other.

"What about—the races?"

"No. Bet you glasses that I know where he's going."

"Shan't take it. Here he comes to tell us."

For the passenger strode up to the two men, and in a sharp, officer-like tone exclaimed:

"Which is the way to the barracks?"

"Cavalry, sir?" said the man who had first spoken; and his enunciation of the *sir* made the querist give an angry start and frown.

"No, infantry," he replied, with a change in his manner; and receiving his brief instructions, he strode off till he reached the big building at whose gates a sentry in undress uniform was slowly marching up and down, and seemed to be attracted by the stranger, and posed as if expecting to be spoken to.

But he was disappointed, for after a hasty glance the traveller turned away and began to walk hurriedly along the street, scanning the different public-houses he passed,

unconscious of the fact that he was followed by a sergeant who was just leaving the barracks, and had been beckoned to by the sentry, who hurriedly whispered a few words.

Frank Lake passed one or two of the more important inns, and then entered the door of rather a low-class place, where without hesitation he noted the words "Parlour," "Taproom," and then turned into the bar, where a smart maid was busily preparing for the first comer.

"Can you give me some breakfast?" said the young officer, meeting the girl's inquiring stare.

"Breakfast, sir? Yes, sir. Private room?"

"Private room! Nonsense!" he replied, frowning. "Let me have it in here;" and he thrust open the empty taproom door, malodorous of stale beer, smoke, and sawdust, and threw himself into a Windsor chair, which gave forth a scroop as it was thrust over the floor.

A few minutes later he was partaking of a big cup of hot coffee, and after the first mouthful or two he poured in the rest of the milk, and then drank again with avidity, leaving the roll and butter upon the tray untouched, as he sat thinking, looking ten years older than a few hours before.

So intent was he upon his thoughts that he paid no heed to the voices coming from the direction of the bar. It was only an inquiry made by the big bluff-looking sergeant who had been following him, and who directly afterwards ordered a glass of ale and marched, whistling carelessly, into the room indicated by the bar-maid, nodded to the traveller, and then crossing to the window took out a briar-root pipe, began to fill it, and uttered an angry snort.

"Mind my opening this window, sir?"

"No," was the reply, given without looking up from the coffee the visitor was stirring.

"Ah!" ejaculated the sergeant, as he pulled down the top of the window. "Enough to poison one! Any one would think fresh air was dear."

There was no reply, and after filling his pipe, the sergeant struck a match on the sole of his boot and applied it to the bowl.

"Thank you, my dear," he continued, puffing away the while.—"Wet morning, sir."

"Eh? yes." As the girl left the room the sergeant took a hearty draught from the ale-glass and set it down with a sharp tap, which made the visitor cease stirring his coffee, the sergeant taking stock of him the while through his half-closed eyes.

"Many passengers by the night mail, sir?"

"Yes—no. I didn't notice." Then after a brief pause, "How did you know I came by the night mail?"

"Oh, that's plain enough. She's just passed through. You're a stranger, and—look here; want to join?"

Frank Lake met the sergeant's inquiring gaze firmly now, and looked searchingly upon his uniform.

"This is York, isn't it?" he said sharply.

"Oh, yes; this is York. There's the castle yonder," added the sergeant meaningly. "You don't want to go there?"

"No," said the young man haughtily. "You belong to the Light Buffs," he continued sharply.

"That's right. You seem to know all about it," said the sergeant, chuckling.

"They're in South Africa," continued the young man.

"That's right; and you have come down to join?"

"Yes. Get it over quickly, and don't ask any questions. There, throw that ale away. What will you take?"

"Nothing now, thank you," replied the sergeant quietly, as, closing his eyes a little more, he scanned his *vis-à-vis* through the smoke of his pipe. "Mean it?" he said, at last.

"Mean it, man! Yes. What do you mean by that question?"

"Oh, nothing much; only when I see a likely man for my purpose I don't want to go too far, and then be humbugged."

"What do you mean—for him to draw back? Oh, don't be afraid of that. You are quite right; I have come down to join."

"Yes—now. But what about to-morrow, or the next day, when you have got over your fit?"

"Do I look like a man who has some fit to get over? What do you take me for?"

"Gent. Young swell who has been on the loose. Trouble of some sort that you will repent of when you have cooled down. About a lady, perhaps."

"Didn't I tell you not to ask questions?" cried the young man. "Here, where's the shilling?"

"I'm not asking questions. I was answering yours. That's what I take you for."

"Where's the shilling?"

"In my pocket," said the sergeant, using his finger as tobacco stopper. "Would you mind standing up and going as far as the door and back?"

Frank Lake sprang to his feet and obeyed, while the sergeant thrust his pipe between his lips again.

"Thankye—sir," he said; and the young man started violently, before re-seating himself.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Only that I'm right. You have served. Volunteers. No," added the sergeant slowly.

"What is that to you, man?"

"Nothing, my lad; and as I want men I'm not going to ask questions. But look here; I'm old enough to be your father, and I've got two boys, just such chaps as you, in the regiment, out against the Zulus. So I just want to say a word or two to you in a fatherly sort of way. Hadn't you better think this over for a few days? You are in a bit of trouble now, and you have had no sleep since yesterday. Just think it over a bit, and if you are of the same mind to-morrow, or next day, or the next, come to the barracks and ask for Sergeant Grey, and then if it is to turn over a new leaf and wipe out something, come and serve the Queen, and I shall be glad to take you, for you look sound as a roach."

Frank Lake gazed at the sergeant angrily for a few moments, and then he stretched out his hand, which the sergeant grasped at once in a hearty grip, smiling to himself as he noted a massive signet ring on one finger, the bloodstone being deeply engraved with a crest.

"Going to take my advice, sir?" he said.

"No, Sergeant," said the young man firmly. "You are right. I am going to begin again."

"In the ranks, sir?"

"Yes, in the ranks. Give me the shilling and get it through for the surgeon and the attesting."

"Nay, nay, lad; wait a bit. Don't do it in haste and repent at leisure."

The young man shook his head.

"I shall not repent, Sergeant. I want to get to the front."

"Yes, yes, my lad—now."

"Look here, Sergeant; give me the shilling, and don't throw a man away. You are right; I have served, and I shall want no drilling."

"Oh, I know that, my lad," said the man confidently, "and I don't want to throw you away, any more than I want to take advantage of a gentleman in trouble for the sake of a few beggarly shillings. Now then, stand me a breakfast, sir—a cup of coffee and a rasher of ham and some eggs, and join me over it while we talk about something else. You will feel a different man then, and I shall feel better too."

The young man smiled faintly as he rose, crossed to the bell, rang it, and then took out a handsome gold cigarette case and lit up.

"Ah, that's better, sir," said the sergeant. "It has given me quite an appetite." And he sat back smoking and smiling as he listened to the breakfast being ordered. "Here, Mary," he interposed, "it's for both of us, you know—rashers from that last ham. It's a tip-top one, sir. They know what ham is down here—and don't fry those new-laid too much. That's right, sir. I know this place. And you are going to join me then?"

"Yes, I will join you, Sergeant."

"That's right, sir; and now, as you have taken one bit of advice, you will excuse me if I give you a bit more?"

"Oh yes, Sergeant. What is it?"

"That signet ring, sir—don't fit with a man coming down to 'list in a fourth-rate York pub. Slip it off, sir, and put it in your pocket."

"Bah ! How absurd ! I never thought of that."

"No, sir, you have been a bit off your head with trouble," said the sergeant, as he watched the effort the young man was making to drag the ring off. "Leave it, sir," he said, "till we have had breakfast. Then wash your hands and make your fingers soapy. It will slip off then."

"Yes, of course, Sergeant. I have done with rings, and I'd ask you to accept this one for your kind, bluff, manly action towards me this morning, but it's an old family ring that belonged to some one else. But I shan't forget this. Look here ; shall I have the chance of serving in your company ?"

"No," said the sergeant.

"You are going to stop here, recruiting in the dépôt ?"

"No, sir. I am going over with the next draft to Zululand. Thank God, for I can look after my two boys. And you are going back to your people to turn over a new leaf."

"No, Sergeant," said the young man, in a low, hoarse voice ; for the maid was coming in with a white cloth to spread the breakfast ordered. "I am going over yonder to turn over the new leaf, or go under."

"Nay, nay, sir ; not you."

"I am, Sergeant ; so as soon as that girl has left the room give me the shilling."

"Nay, sir, I we-an't, as we say down here in Yorkshire."

"Then mark this ; you will lose your chance, for I shall leave this house, and take the shilling from the first man who will enlist a new recruit."

II.

It was like a compact between the two. There had been no questioning and no answering, but non-com. and officer of another regiment thoroughly understood each other—the bluff sergeant, as true a gentleman at heart as was ever born ; the officer, a gentleman by birth and position, humbled with the feeling that fate and his own folly had made him his elder's inferior. And all had gone on during the next three months

exactly as the recruit had wished. His comrades in the fresh draft rather avoided him, for they did not consider him a good fellow, and the sergeant's brother officers classed him as a gentleman ranker with a past, while the officers looked at him askance. But he schooled himself to his position, and in bitterness he struggled on in his effort to turn over that hard, hard leaf, often with bitter repentance ready to pray that the time might soon come when he might prove his truth and earnestness, and in one stern moment of duty wipe out the past, leaving upon the now blank leaf he was turning over some deeply marked lines of proof that he was at heart worthy of the name of gentleman, in spite of the denunciation of the dead.

Some months passed. His detachment was drafted to strengthen the little garrison at a settlement in the far south-east, where, consequent on the threatening movements of the Zulus, a party of English people, the families of gentlemen farmers, and a few ladies, and among others the wives and daughters of the officers of the regiment, had seemed to drift together for the protection of the military at a time of need during the native rising.

It was a strange working of fate that had kept the old sergeant and his recruit together all through, and though they met but seldom, when they did it was for Sergeant Grey to give the gentleman ranker a quiet, meaning nod and a few words about their position, and the prospect of something serious occurring before long.

"No, Sergeant," Frank Lake said one day, "Fate's against me, and I shall never get my chance."

"Never's a long day, sir—recruity, I mean," said the sergeant, with a grim smile. "I don't want to shirk fighting, but at my time of life, when I'm thinking about retiring on my pension, I don't feel so eager as you do to be wiped out, nor to see my two boys go under. I've got a bit of character for not being a coward, and I think I have earned my promotion; but I should be glad to feel that we'd done all that these niggers are asking for, and quieted them down with a

little bleeding so as to stop their fever, and made the poor ladies we have got in charge safe."

"Oh, they are safe enough, Sergeant, and I shall see you get your promotion of sergeant-major and be sent off home, for there will be no fighting now."

"You'll see," said the old non-com. grimly.

He was a true prophet, for the little settlement became one of the tight places of the war, and in one attack, made in a surprise by the Zulus, their captain of the company went down, and the old sergeant was wounded near unto death by a skilfully thrown spear.

There was a few hours' reprieve then, but it was a busy time, the defenders of the little place having enough to do to bandage wounds and snatch a few hours' rest, not sleep, but the simple recruiting of wearied and strained muscles, while despair, mingled with stubborn recklessness, was plainly shown amongst the men, who felt that if another attack were made all would be over.

"Cheer up, my lads," said one of the corporals. "There's only one thing to do now."

"What's that?" asked a fellow soldier of the same rank.

"Have a quiet smoke, and then give the bayonet to as many of the black hounds as we can."

"Yes," said another, who was re-binding a painful assegai stab. "I should just like to come upon the chap who did this, and I should feel a bit happier then. And I should know him again."

"Not you! Kill all you can."

"All right; I mean to do that, comrade, but I want to give it that chap who did this. I should know him, for he's six foot six if he's an inch."

"Well," said another, "I don't know as I should care much. A soldier's got to die some time, and as that there fellow said, life ain't all beer and skittles."

"I say, don't," said the first corporal who had spoken. "If you fellows can't talk sense, shut up."

"Well, why ain't that sense? What's the matter with it?" said the last man testily.

"Why, to talk about beer to a set of men choking with thirst, and hardly enough water for the poor women—ladies, I mean."

"Ah, the poor women!" groaned another, as he counted the cartridges left in his pouch. "But I don't call it sense to talk about them. Can't nothing be done? Couldn't we get away in the dark?"

"No, my lad. They are about twenty to one, and we are regularly surrounded. There, it's no use talking. Let's remember that we are British soldiers, and we have got to die game."

"Ay," said another; "they'll have to pay for it some day."

"Yes," said another, through his set teeth, and there was a curiously fierce look in his eyes that seemed to spell danger to the foe; "but it's hard lines to be like this, and without an officer to lead us and give his orders."

"Ah, it's a bad job," said the second corporal, "but you don't want no officers now, shut up as we are. 'Tain't a time for learning the bayonet exercise. You have had practice enough now."

"That's right enough, Corporal. But it seems more natural like to have an officer over you. And not even the Major now."

"What! What do you mean? He's all right, isn't he?"

"Right?" said the corporal. "No, poor old chap. He sent for me a bit ago to give me an order or two, but it only meant that we were to do our best, now the poor sergeant's down. 'I needn't tell you to fight, my lads. Just set your teeth hard, and think of the ladies,' and then he regular broke down, and I come away."

"But look here," said the man who had mentioned the officers; "we ought to have some one to lead besides non-coms. I want to know why you don't do something, Private York."

"What!" cried Frank Lake, starting up fiercely from where he had apparently lain asleep; and his eyes flashed

strangely from beneath the blood-stained bandage across his forehead. "Haven't I done my best?"

"Course you have, comrade—more than any of us. But you've been an officer and a gentleman, and ought to take the lead now."

"Who says I have been an officer and a gentleman?"

"Who says so?" growled the man. "Why, all of us. Gentleman ranker, that's what you are. We ain't finding fault. Nobody ain't chucked it in your teeth. You can't help it. But you are as good a soldier as ever stepped, all the same, and it don't matter now, do it, comrades?"

"No!" came in a low growl.

"And we are all equal now," said another, "or if we ain't we shall be before long."

"Ay, ay!" came in a deep growl; and the other went on:

"I can't say as ever I liked you, because you never seemed to belong to us, and the poor old sergeant was always on your side, and I don't mind owning it now—it always seemed as if old Grey thought everything you did was right and what we did was wrong. But never mind that, Private York—gentleman ranker. Never mind about old sores; it's big wounds now. I say, take your place and see what you can do for us. Gents is cleverer at thinking than chaps like us. You lead; and I am speaking for the lot of us; say what we can do to save the ladies, and we will follow you as long as we can lift an arm. Hallo, what does she want? P'st, lads! She ain't come to say the poor old Major's gone?"

For bare-headed and with strained eyes, the Major's daughter came hurrying up to the group of soldiers, straight to where, on catching sight of her, Frank Lake had sprung to his feet and then tottered and sunk upon his knees.

"My father wants you, Private York," she said, in an agitated voice.

Frank Lake caught up the rifle lying by his side and used it to steady his steps as he followed the fair young messenger, and she led the way towards the barricaded farmhouse, where the wounded and the women were together. But by making

an effort, nerved as he was by the presence of the bearer of the Major's order, he seemed to recover strength, and a few minutes later he was standing by the old officer's pallet.

"Who's that?" he said feebly.

"Private York, father," said the girl, leaning by the wounded officer's side.

"Private York," he said feebly, and his eyes looked wandering and strange—"Private York? Who is—Oh, I remember now. The sergeant told me; but it was what I knew all the same. Look here, sir; you have been an officer and a gentleman. You must take up what I should have entrusted to Sergeant Grey. Stand back, my dear. Join the other poor women."

The girl hesitated for a moment or two, and then went outside the door, and obeying a gesture, Frank Lake sank upon his knees by the old warrior's side.

"Come closer," he said; and the wounded soldier bent lower and listened to the old officer's words.

They were very few, and they brought a deep groan-like sob from the young man's breast.

"No, sir, no!" he panted. "It is impossible!"

His refusal seemed to give the old man strength, and he said quite sternly now, as he raised one hand for a moment, to let it fall heavily:

"You see," he said. "Before long that may be lying still. You have been an officer and a gentleman. That is true, is it not? I ask you as a dying man."

Frank Lake bowed his head.

"Then as a brave English soldier and a gentleman I tell you it is your duty. Do it as a man, before it becomes too late.—Ah, too late now!" groaned the old man, as he sank back insensible, for at that moment there was a shout of warning, and Frank Lake made a rush for the door, encountering the Major's daughter and pointing to where her father lay, while the next minute he was hurrying out, as if invigorated by the old man's words, to join the group of defenders who were preparing to receive a fresh onslaught of the black warriors

who were rapidly approaching through the darkness of the coming night.

"Now, my lads!" he cried; and his comrades uttered a hoarse cheer, for he seemed transformed, while they hailed the leader who had risen amongst them to rouse them from despair. Then nerved by the determination to die in the defence of those but a few yards away, but telling himself that he could not obey the old officer's whispered words, he made a few hurried changes in their plan of defence, speaking hoarsely, but with a decision which evoked another cheer from the wounded defenders, for it meant closing up till they were surrounding the barricaded farmhouse, within whose walls he meant to make their last stand.

"I leave the rest to fate," he muttered to himself. "The old man is right, but my hand could not fire that shot."

The rest was to Frank Lake like a dream of delirium, for the rush of swarthy figures coming out of the darkness with their savage yells did not seem like an incident of reality; then long after, heard above the savage yelling, there came the distant call of a bugle sounding the charge.

"Fancy," he sighed to himself, as he raised his rifle and fired into the dense black crowd, his example being followed in the scattered volley of his comrades.

And then—no fancy this time, but the ringing notes of a British bugle, a stentorian cheer, and a line of bayonets was clashing amongst the spears of the fierce Zulus, who broke and fled.

Then the darkness ruled supreme, till Frank Lake opened his eyes wonderingly as he tried to realise what it all meant.

It was a surgeon, who was giving the last touches to his wounds. That was plain enough; but the rest was somehow connected with the past, and he could not understand why an old brother officer of his regiment should be kneeling there holding a flask and its cup ready to place to his lips when the doctor gave the word.

"Murray," he said feebly.

"Yes. We were just in time. But, my dear old chap, how came you here? Every one thought you were dead."

"Dead! Yes. Don't talk about it. I'll tell you later on. I am dead to society."

"Don't press him. Don't let him talk," said the doctor, in a low voice. "He is rambling. Are you going to stay here now?"

"Yes, of course."

There was silence then for a few moments, and the two young men were alone.

"Not rambling, Murray, old chap. I know what I am saying. I must tell you now. I could not face matters when my uncle——"

He paused.

"Try and go on, old fellow. When your uncle——?"

"Yes—when my uncle died; and I came out here to get killed as the best thing I could do."

"Ah, well, you haven't got killed; but it was very near. I exchanged and came out too, to see if I couldn't win promotion. But lie still and go to sleep now. You mustn't talk. You will be clearer after a rest, and can tell me what you mean about your uncle. You didn't quarrel with him, did you?"

"No, but he met his death at my hands."

"Nonsense! The old man has been moving heaven and earth to find out what had become of you."

"What! Did you not hear what I said?"

"Yes, dear boy, and you are wandering a bit. I met the old man before I left for the Cape. But he took it very much to heart that you had disappeared, and told me that if we should meet I was to say that that business had all been squared."

THE MARQUIS FORLORN.

BY PASCHAL H. COGGINS.

“**M**AKE way there, worthy gentlemen. The Marquis Forlorn !”

Ned Blythe turned toward the little knot of students gathered just within the portals of Jefferson Medical College, and flourished his cane in a stiff and solemn gesture of command.

The “Meds,” always ready for a joke, doffed their hats and hastily opened a generous passageway for the self-appointed herald. Every ear had caught the pun on the title of an English nobleman which was just then much in the newspapers, and every face was eager with curiosity. What new audacity was Blythe about to perpetrate, and who was his victim ?

They were not left long in doubt, for the light cane was still high aloft when the gaunt figure of “Stingy” Wilcox crossed the threshold, and with his great swinging strides followed his graceful usher down the stone-paved hall to the lecture-room.

As the students recognised the new arrival something very like a wave of enthusiasm swept along their ranks. John Wilcox was the most unpopular member of the class, and Ned’s impromptu nickname for him seemed a stroke of genius. Wilcox had a kind of offensive dignity about him that made “the Marquis” fit him like a wet glove. As for “forlorn,”—well, his coat was threadbare when he entered college eighteen months before, and he had been trying to brush the shine off of it ever since. Then, too, there was a quick, exultant

belief that the title carried just the innuendo that would pierce that armour of rustic complacency which, so far, had blunted the point of more than one well-directed practical joke.

With head erect and his handsome face set rigidly to the front, Blythe marched solemnly down the hall, maintaining his slight lead without apparent effort. Could that, thought the Meds, really be the same prince of jolly good fellows who so deftly tossed dignity to the winds in their festive excursions about the staid old Quaker city? He opened the great swinging door with the slow deliberation of a well-trained flunkey.

The next instant the half-score of early students, lounging indolently upon the long wooden forms of the class-room, were startled by Blythe's clear, well-modulated voice: "The Marquis Forlorn!" Turning in astonishment they saw "Stingy" Wilcox just advancing through the doorway, and Blythe, bareheaded and deferential, standing aside to let him pass. The spirit of the thing was irresistible, and the dull looks and careless attitudes vanished as by an electric thrill.

Suddenly Wilcox paused and turned full upon his tormentor. Involuntarily the young men upon the benches sprang to their feet, and those in the outer hall pressed hastily forward to witness the outcome. A blow was by no means improbable, and Blythe was a noted boxer, and as plucky as a gamecock.

As they stood there the contrast between the two was strong and well-defined. Blythe was lithe of figure, self-possessed, and smiling; Wilcox was gaunt, rugged, and earnest. For possibly two seconds they confronted each other in perfect silence, and then without the slightest demonstration of any kind, Wilcox passed on to his accustomed seat by the window. The verdict of his fellow-students was prompt and unanimous. He had added cowardice to meanness.

There was a significant shrugging of shoulders and lifting of eyebrows as the whole class trooped noisily down the uncarpeted aisles to their seats. The thumb-bell on the professor's desk sounded the call for note-books and pencils,

and the lecture began. The tiny whirlwind of feeling had subsided.

As far as Blythe was concerned, the affair didn't amount to much, beyond, possibly, a mild sensation of artistic triumph. He had promised himself at the outset that he would lead the fellow along the hair-edge of the fighting-line without actually drawing a blow. He had done better, for there had not even been an exchange of words.

And yet the fact remained that Wilcox seemed rather poor game. He cut no particular figure at "quiz," none whatever in college athletics, and worse than none in the social functions of his class. "Why did I bother with him?" thought Blythe.

There was an acute dramatic instinct in Blythe's nature that was quite irresistible, even to himself. It rendered him wonderfully susceptible to the play of human emotions around him, and was for ever tempting him to set those emotions vibrating merely for his own and others' amusement. His little piece of mummery had been really prompted less by a wish to ridicule Wilcox than by his own dominating impulse to create and enjoy a sensation.

The next day and the days which followed frequently brought Blythe face to face with "the Marquis," who made no sign either of recognition or resentment—but then Wilcox never did speak to anybody except by accident. Indeed, if the question had been put to his fellow-students, they would have attributed his unpopularity to his lack of social impulses. He was the only man of his class who had refused to attend or subscribe to the class suppers.

Two busy months came and went, and though John Wilcox's high-sounding title survived, the incident of its bestowal had passed to the crowded limbo of departed college jokes. The spirit of the approaching holidays was in the air, and Craig Morton and Ned Blythe sat together one evening in Morton's room awaiting the arrival of certain other boon companions. As Craig put it, they were going out for a "miscellaneous assortment of fun."

"By the way, Blythe," he continued, settling himself in his "lazy" chair, "last Sunday afternoon, at about three of the clock, I observed a most remarkable and interesting phenomenon. The Marquis walked down Broad Street dressed in a first-rate suit of clothes. Tailor-made, as I live."

"Sorry, Craig," said Blythe, "but as a sensation your information comes a trifle late. I saw that suit in Chestnut Street a week ago."

"Oh, you did, did you? He's a queer duck, is the Marquis. *He'll* never starve, though. He'll graduate, of course,—that sort always get their sheepskins,—and then—why, imagination falters. What's to prevent him from mounting the professional ladder, round by round, until in the end he stands forth, the proprietor of a corner drug-store, with a soda-water attachment?"

Blythe made no response.

"They say," Morton continued, with renewed animation, "that your style with him was quite Wraybornesque—that affair at lectures, I mean. I happen to have cut that particular lecture myself, so I missed the show. Had him undergoing 'grinding torments,' and all that sort of thing, without turning a hair yourself."

Blythe gave an impatient little grunt, and a close observer would have suspected that he was not quite at his ease. He glanced at Morton curiously, but smoked away for half a dozen puffs or so with increased vigour and in ominous silence.

"Craig," he broke out at length, "that fellow's too much for me." All the badinage had suddenly vanished from his manner. "I suspected it at the time, and the conviction's been growing on me ever since. I let the other fellows count it a hit, of course, but when you come to putting it at me seriously, I must rise up. Talk about Eugene Wrayborn and his schoolmaster and grinding torments! Why, that performance of mine didn't even ruffle his temper. I *know* it. It wasn't a matter of sight. I *felt* it. By Jove, Craig, while

he stood there looking at me, I somehow felt that he was no more annoyed than I was myself, only—well, I don't pretend to understand him—but we should never fool ourselves, and I tell you I didn't have the best of it that day."

This from the imperturbable Blythe was so preposterous that Morton could only stare.

"So much for his mental suffering!" Blythe resumed. "But that isn't quite all. A couple of weeks ago I was coming up Chestnut Street, and at Tenth I had to stop at the car-track while some sort of slow vehicle dragged past. I happened to glance behind, when some one ahead shouted my name. I looked around again just in time to dodge a heavy iron rail that stuck out from the tail of the waggon. The driver had suddenly turned up Chestnut Street at my risk. If the thing had struck me, my head wouldn't have been worth carrying home. It was Wilcox who had warned me, and I felt moved to do the decent thing in the line of gratitude."

"Oh, I see, I see," and the puzzled look melted from Morton's features. "It all led to a happy reconciliation, and you treated Stingy to a new suit of clothes to cover back accounts."

"I did, did I?" drawled Blythe, in a tone of enforced patience. "Well, as nearly as I could make out he had forgotten my existence before I was near enough to speak. My vote of thanks failed for want of a second."

Craig contemplated his friend in perplexed silence for a long minute. This was serious, and he determined to have Ned in gayer spirits before the rest of the party joined them. Assuming a tone of mock solicitude, that seldom failed of its end, he began a new attack.

"Blythe, you're showing some very alarming symptoms. If you'll pardon the freedom of a friend, I've noticed a dangerous tendency upon your part of late toward the habitual use of water as a beverage. I know what you'll say," and he held up his hand as if to check a natural but mistaken protest, "you think you can take it when you want it, and leave it

alone when you wish. It's a dangerous error. The habit's a most insidious one, and the only safe course is to stick to the regular beverages. Take the advice of a friend—and a fresh cigarette."

This raillery affected Blythe almost as something uncanny might have done. He strode impatiently to the window and stood there in silence, looking down upon the passing street-cars without seeing them.

His thoughts had suddenly taken flight to his home away up in northern New York. He thought of his mother's letters, so tremulous with a fear they did not express; of his sister's questions as to his friends and his pleasures, carefully underscored to secure their more definite answer. He wondered if, really, he was in any danger. Then came the sound of voices and footsteps on the stairs, and his wondering ceased.

During the next few hours the young men doubtless found the raw "fun" they sought in the theatre, a few games of billiards, and a late supper. Craig Morton's hilarious example succeeded where his mock philosophy had failed, and Ned Blythe was soon free from the sombre shadows of his distant home. His mimicry and the keenness of his repartee kept the party in a gale of mirth.

But all things must end and, with the passing hours, high spirits began to flag and pleasure to lose its freshness. One by one the soberer members of the party bade their comrades "good night," and sought their beds. Even Morton, after some vague attempt to induce Blythe to accompany him, departed alone.

John Wilcox, hastening homeward from a visit to one of the emergency hospitals, was just crossing a broad band of light that streamed out from a public drinking saloon, when the swinging doors were thrust broadly open by some departing guest, and the light and noise attracted his attention. He glanced in, and what he saw caused him first to slacken his speed, and then to come to a full stop and retrace his steps.

Three young men, shamefully intoxicated, were before the bar. One of them was engaged in a drunken altercation with a typical rowdy, himself reckless with drink. It was one of those tableaux which sometimes dissolve in idle words, and sometimes in ghastly wounds and ruined lives. Somehow the spectacle seemed to stir grief in Wilcox. He stood for a moment upon the threshold and then, with a firm step, entered the saloon.

Blythe felt a firm hand upon his shoulder, and, turning unsteadily about, beheld a familiar face. At first he seemed in doubt as to their mutual relation, whether friends or foes. At length, moved perhaps by the incident most easily recalled, or perhaps by some vague, high instinct of the soul toward self-preservation, his wavering mind chose peace.

"Gen'a'men," with a feeble flourish of the hand toward his visitor; "thish m' ol' friend, Markus o'—Markus o'—M's'r Stingy Wilcox, yo' know," and he paused, while his two companions proffered a tipsy response to the introduction.

Then Blythe began an incoherent recital of all he knew, or thought he knew, about John Wilcox, and finally came to the incident of the iron-laden waggon. Upon that critical occasion, his listeners were gravely informed, Wilcox had saved him from "public decapitation," for which invaluable service he was now making his heartfelt acknowledgments. John Wilcox remained passive during the whole of this pitiable scene, save that his hand slipped gently down from Ned's shoulder to his arm.

"Blythe, I want you."

Again the look of uncertainty came into the flushed face, and there was a pause; but once again the better will prevailed. After two ineffectual attempts to find the rim of his hat, Ned Blythe bared his head by way of parting courtesy, and guided by the steady hand at his elbow, turned and tottered out into the crisp December air.

When consciousness next dawned for Ned Blythe it was morning, and he found himself resting upon a comfortable couch in strange quarters. A folding screen obstructed his

view, but some one close at hand was moving about on tiptoe. Slowly his aching brain supplied the shreds and fragments of last night's adventures, until at length he realised where he was and how he chanced to be there. He was in the room of Stingy Wilcox!

The thought stung his brain into sudden activity. What right had this boor to humiliate him? It was the revenge of a coward!

"Boor and coward!" Before these epithets reached his hot lips he knew them false. The rugged features and simple, earnest words which came back to him now from out the aching chaos of the night gave the lie to both. Quietly Blythe turned his burning face to the wall and yielded to better, saner thoughts. So very silent he lay that Wilcox, moving noiselessly about the room, felt sure he was awake.

Beneath the enforced self-scrutiny of that silence, Blythe's vanity melted. He saw the pettiness of his own poor little tricks of self-possession when measured beside the moral composure of the youth he had so often sought to ridicule.

At length Wilcox heard a slight noise in the direction of the couch, and looking around discovered Blythe sitting up. He had pushed the screen to one side.

"Mr. Wilcox, who are you?"

A faint smile flitted about the corners of the serious mouth, but the answer came quite calmly: "John Wilcox. No middle name. From near Cleveland, Ohio."

"Well, I know—but what under the canopy made you stand by me last night?"

There was a long pause. Wilcox stood with his elbow resting on the screen and his serious gaze full upon Blythe's upturned, expectant face.

"It isn't always quite possible," he said at last, "to tell exactly why we do this or that. I've had several thoughts about you. One was that it was rather fine of you, all things considered, to select me for that little performance of yours last fall."

Blythe winced, but there was no need.

"A coward would have chosen some weaker fellow—some one whose feelings might have been hurt, and who couldn't have resented the thing in any event. I noticed you at the time, and I know that you would not shirk the attack you provoked. It's something—that sort of courage—not very much, perhaps, but a man can't afford to be without it.

"Then, too," he went on, "I've noticed your answers at the class quiz, and I believe you've the making of a skilful doctor, if you ever take to work in earnest. I judge as much by your failures as by your successes. They're both significant, you know."

"But what of it? Why do you care whether I make a good doctor or not?"

"Only this," and Wilcox spoke more freely, and with a little air of haste. "I feel that you're not giving yourself quite a fair chance. I hoped you might look at it in the same light. If you do, and if you want my help, Blythe, you can have it. You'll always be welcome here, and—and—you needn't stop to knock."

How ridiculous that permission would have sounded a few months before! Ned Blythe, the admitted leader in all the college fun, was welcome to bury himself in the musty companionship of Stingy Wilcox! But now there were undoubted tears in Blythe's eyes as, without a word, he extended his hand in token of the best friendship he had ever found.

In the end, helped and encouraged by a stronger will, Blythe himself grew brave, conquered his growing appetite for strong drink, and equipped himself well with knowledge.

At last the day came when the two friends stood side by side upon the great stage of the Academy of Music, and together reaped their first well-earned honours.

For good or for evil, the door of their great profession was thrown wide open before them. Then came the hasty packing of trunks, and those parting scenes which mellow with passing time, but which never quite leave the canvas of one's memory.

Ned was on his knees attempting to force an extra waistcoat into a bursting valise. The door opened, and John Wilcox entered. Blythe did not look up from his work ; indeed, he bent the closer to his task.

"Ned, this is your doing."

Blythe sprang to his feet in grotesque astonishment and gazed at the open letter in his friend's extended hand. He pretended to examine the handwriting, shook his head, and said : "That's not my writing, and I never saw it until this minute. A dun, I suppose ?"

"It's very kind of you all !" Wilcox resumed, ignoring the other's protest ; "and if you wish it, I will go home with you for a couple of weeks."

"Glory !" said Ned, and then grumbled gleefully, "I might have invited you until I turned blue in the face and you'd have just kept on shaking that stubborn head of yours. It takes mother and Nell to capture a chap of your sort."

"They have written very cordially," replied Wilcox gently, "and I think I'd like to go."

Later, when together and for the last time they had climbed up to Wilcox's dismantled quarters, Blythe put a question which had been on his lips a hundred times before, and as often died unuttered.

"John, the first time I was in this room, I asked you why you had chosen to be my friend, and you didn't tell me the whole truth. There was something back of it all. I've felt it often. What was it ?"

Wilcox was standing by the open window, gazing off over the smoky factories at the waters of the Delaware, silvery in the distance. He started slightly, but steadied himself on the instant and stood motionless. For a long while he was silent, and when he did speak his voice at first was hardly audible.

"Yes," he said, "there was something else," and again he hesitated.

"It doesn't take long in the telling, and yet it's not quite easy to put into words. Ned, two years before I came to

college my only brother died. He ought to have lived longer—and better. We were very different, Rob and I, and he was much like you. We were alone together and, God knows, I tried to do a brother's part, but I was clumsy at it. I saw the boy's better nature crushed and smothered beneath a little wit, a little grace of speech and of bearing, a little of life's merest show and glitter. One earnest ambition, no matter of what sort, might have saved him.

"And so," he continued, yet more slowly, with his eyes still fixed on the fair, tranquil river, "when I saw you passing in Rob's own footsteps, I just held out my hand. It was good of you to take it. Good for both of us, I hope."

THE FAMILY HONOUR.

BY NELLIE HOLDERNESS.

THE two Scarletts—Gordon and Reginald—were first cousins, with the blood of many a soldier ancestor in their veins, and both, moved by a common impulse, had chosen the army as their profession. And surely it was more than blind chance that had gazetted them to the same regiment—Reginald to a battalion stationed in Burmah, Gordon to one in England!

Reginald had started for the little Burmese cantonment in which the Second Battalion was quartered before Gordon, who had headed the list of Colonial commissions, arrived in England, so that they were still strangers to each other when Gordon, after a six months' experience of Infantry life in English barracks succeeded in effecting an exchange into his cousin's battalion, in Burmah.

Gordon felt, on the whole, that he had done wisely. His small allowance of a hundred a year—for he was the eldest of a large family, and therefore one of many to be provided for—had been all but swallowed up in a month. He knew of fellows who lived on their pay in India,—his cousin, Rex, had assured him by letter over and over again that it could be done, though he had confessed that his own allowance did not come amiss.

Gordon's early impressions of Schwebo were not entirely exhilarating. It was the first cool of the evening when he arrived, and peace reigned over the square mile or so of cantonment,—from the disused native barracks at the far end to the strongly defined road-line that ran along the edge of the

jungle, and jungle and paddy-field together seemed to form a monotonous almost treeless expanse that brought neither rest to the eye nor satisfaction to the mind. But beyond, the gilded dome of a far-off village pagoda that glowed and sparkled in the last sun-rays caught his wandering fancy, and lit up his face with a smile. The barracks, typical of Burmah with its treacherous climate, were, he observed, built on piles, that raised them a safe distance above the ground.

The cousins met without any other display of feeling than might be conveyed in the warmth of a hand-grip or the interchange of a glance of mutual comradeship. They appeared curiously unlike as they stood together in the ante-room, after mess. Gordon, with his dark hair and hazel eyes and the rich, warm glow of health in his cheeks. Reginald, pale and slight, with large blue eyes that seemed all the larger for the thinness of his smooth, boyish face, and hair of a mondescript colour that had in it a tint of gold.

"But I say, Rex," remarked Gordon, "this seems to me a horribly slow sort of a hole! Is there ever anything going on?"

"Polo, pig-sticking, duck-shooting occasionally, and bridge! But I don't suppose you go in for bridge, I've had to knock it off!"

"I can't go making myself peculiar! Other fellows play! And how about polo?"

"I've got a pony. I can tell you where to get one. You can manage that, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes!" returned Gordon, with his lordliest air. "And there's no sort of society here, I suppose?"

"If you mean are there any ladies—Europeans—no! Only the two in the regiment, and, I believe, the commissioner's wife. But there's one thing, we've got the best band in India, every one says so!"

"Well," said Gordon with a sigh, "I'm landed out here, it seems, so there's nothing for it but to make the best of it! And the first few days' leave I get I'm off to Mandalay!"

"It's a good seven hours' business, or thereabouts!" said Rex ruefully.

"Never mind, it's worth it! I'll take a pack of cards. And there's that Civil Service chap, Foster, we've got to call on. You neglect your duties shamefully, Rex!"

"He's just got married," said Rex in excuse.

"All the better! What an unsociable old bear you are!"

As the days went on Rex began to feel this cousin of his, who was just three months his junior, something of a responsibility. Rex's father had died when he was a child, and he had learnt early to rely upon his own judgment. He was chivalrous, too, with a deep-rooted love of home and kindred, and the thought of his widowed mother had saved him already from many a youthful indiscretion that might have led him into deeper wrong. Gordon, who bore his mother's family name without inheriting her practical good sense, was equally sensitive, and much more easily led; and popularity, of which, indeed, he had always had his full share, was as the breath of existence to him.

Bridge—and especially among the younger officers—was greatly in vogue, and the stakes, which had started high, ran higher week by week. Gordon's luck—for he was not a brilliant player—soon became proverbial. Then all at once he began steadily to lose. But he played on undaunted, with a dogged and reckless persistence that caused his fellow-officers more than once to exchange significant glances.

"That's my last rupee!" he said to himself, as he turned in at his quarters one night. "Now if I could only borrow a hundred or so! The luck's bound to turn soon!" He found Rex sitting on his bed awaiting him.

"Hullo, old man," began Gordon in his jaunty fashion; "to what may I ascribe the honour of this nocturnal visit?"

"Here's a letter—a business affair! It belongs to you, not to me! But as it was brought round to me I naturally opened it! I see it's rather urgent!"

"What! fifty pounds! What an old Jew! Well, it'll have to wait, urgent or not. I'm just stoney-broke, and that's a fact." And Gordon began to whistle with great cheerfulness.

"You're going it a bit too strong, old chap!" urged Rex

in a low voice—"if that's true, and you are, as you say, stoney-broke."

"Well, aren't you? Isn't everybody, with this rotten system of pay?"

"You're a bit of a fool, Gordon! I warned you about the cards. Fellows in our position, without private means, just can't do it!"

"Look here, Rex, if you, on the strength of your few weeks' seniority, imagine you're going to act the father to a fellow who knows twice as much about the world as you do yourself—well, I'm sorry for you! If you'd offer to lend me a hundred rupees or so it would be more to the point."

"Very well, I'll lend it you, on condition——"

"Oh, always on condition!"

"That you knock off bridge!"

"What a fellow you are! Here I am in the dullest hole on earth, and you want to deprive me of my one relaxation! How you ever manage to exist yourself——"

"I like the work," said Rex simply; "and don't forget you've got your promotion exam. coming on too! If I were you I should get an exchange. I'm going to try for one."

"What, into the Indian Army?"

"Yes, it's better pay and a better system; and very few of the fellows are what you'd call millionaires. They make a profession of the Service, not a game!"

"Like myself, you mean? Ah, well, it's not half what you think it—the Army! One of life's disillusiones, I call it. I am sick to death of it all, and I wish with all my heart I was back in New Zealand on a snug little farm."

"Look here," cried the impulsive, tender-hearted Rex, "you're feeling a bit down. I'll let you have the hundred rupees just to go on with; and then I've got fifty pounds put by—I don't want it at present. You pay that off! It's a sort of a family debt, you see—and you'll start clear!"

"What a fellow you are!" repeated Gordon, with glistening eyes.

For a day or two he held aloof from the bridge table, but

the temptation proved too strong, and he yielded at last. The stakes ran as high as ever, and sometimes he gained, but more frequently lost, until there was precious little of the hundred rupees left to be accounted for. Rex, of course, though he said nothing, knew pretty well what was going on, and Gordon had the grace at times to feel a certain hot shame when he chanced to meet those half reproachful blue eyes that were so quick to reveal their owner's thoughts.

At the end of the week, on Reginald's suggestion, they both applied for a few days' leave, and this being granted they took the early train to Mandalay. Arthur Foster, a friend of Reginald's elder brother's, welcomed them warmly. Besides his wife, there was staying in the house another young lady, a relation of Mrs. Foster's, who had come on a six months' visit to Burmah. Sylvia Manners was both pretty and accomplished, and she was, besides, the first English girl with whom either of the young men had, since leaving England, come into personal contact, and being impressionable and inexperienced, they both went back to Schwebo, after their second visit to the Fosters, feeling very homesick and very much in love. Gordon, of course, opened his heart to his cousin. Rex, true to his nature, kept his own counsel. Miss Manners was free to choose between them, and if her choice fell on Gordon, as Rex had every reason to believe it would, he was not going to break his heart about it. Yet in case—and here he recalled the look in her eyes just after she had heard him sing—he should be the lucky fellow, he might just as well fill up his form of exchange without delay.

As often as not at the end of the week the cousins would take the train to Mandalay, where, on the Badminton Court belonging to the Club, there was always a chance of meeting Miss Manners.

The weeks went by. Though the fateful word was not yet spoken, Sylvia appeared already to have made her choice. Gordon's persistent devotion was bound in the end to have its reward; for Rex, always in the background, quiet and unobtrusive, with the most modest opinion in the world of

his own merits, had easily given place to his more self-assured cousin. If Sylvia had cared for him, she would, he told himself, have found some means of showing it. And yet once at the Fosters'—the last night they had been there,—there had been that in her face as he came to the end of one of his songs that made his heart beat faster. For his voice was no ordinary one, and he sang with a depth of feeling of which he was himself hardly conscious. And then Gordon had come up, and remarked aside to him, half in earnest, half in jest, "Why, any one hearing you sing that might think you were in love yourself! But that's your way—you're always in such dead earnest about everything."

Rex kept studiously away from Miss Manners' side the rest of the evening, and nothing would induce him to sing again. The next time Gordon went down to Mandalay Rex was on duty, and could not accompany him. Gordon returned the following evening. He was in the wildest spirits, and with the glow of health in his bronzed cheeks and the light in his eyes, looked in his white mess uniform as handsome a fellow as the battalion could boast.

"Rex," said he, as he came up with his cousin in the ante-room, "congratulate me! I'm engaged to the best and dearest girl in the world!"

The blow had fallen. Rex looked away a moment and did not speak. Then he gave a short, half satirical laugh. "On a subaltern's pay! Oh, you young idiot!" he said. "And when's the marriage coming off?"

"Not just yet, of course. I'm going to exchange, and start saving!"

"I see!" murmured Rex sympathetically.

"Why, what an old pessimist you are!" exclaimed Gordon.

* * * * *

In those days Rex's spirits, never very buoyant under the strain of the tropical climate, fell to their lowest ebb. The heat had been phenomenal even for the time of year, and mind and body became a prey to a restless lassitude against

which he struggled in vain. Inwardly he cherished the secret ambition that one day he might, like his namesake and hero, be a great commander. There was in his nature, indeed, a certain steadfastness, coupled with unusual brain power, that needed but the spur of some such ambition to make of him a man of note. Dressed in smartly cut khaki, with eye alert and easy bearing, he would take command of his company on a Review Day with the air of one to whom Inspections and Company Commands are everyday facts. And yet he would blush like a girl at the General's word of approval. Hitherto this interest in his work had been the one thing in the present worth living for, but now, all at once, it began to slip away from him. And it was just at this stage that another such note as had been brought to him three months ago came by a similar chance into his hands.

The band had stopped playing, and a leisurely group of officers had just returned from the Polo ground. Rex drew his cousin aside.

"Is this yours?" he inquired.

Gordon took it and reddened painfully.

"Open it and make sure," said Rex, with a ring of sternness in his voice.

Gordon hurriedly obeyed.

"Yes, it's all right! It's my look-out, not yours! There's the first mess-bugle call, so come along!"

Rex walked on beside him towards the Subalterns' Quarters.

"I'll come up with you a minute," he said.

"We've got to dress, you know."

"Yes, I won't be long. Here we are! I say, isn't there some mistake about that thing? Didn't I forward you fifty pounds to clear it off?"

"I daresay you did," said Gordon, with an angry flash in his eyes. "You must know very well I've had heaps of expenses—going down to Mandalay, and presents for Sylvia. You're bound to give a girl a present now and then when you're engaged to her!"

"You're more of a fool than I took you for," said Rex contemptuously, "and what's more," he added hotly, "you're a dishonourable fool!"

Gordon, speechless with rage, sprang upon his cousin, and with a sudden and violent blow felled him to the ground. He lay there, white and motionless, for in falling he had struck his head sharply against the wall. Gordon, bending over him, felt at his heart a sudden chill of horror and remorse. But Rex was only stunned, and after a minute or so he opened his eyes, and with his cousin's help got unsteadily on to his feet.

"You're—you're not hurt?" stammered Gordon, all his passionate anger gone in a moment. "I'm sorry—but——"

"Oh, it's nothing, thanks," said Rex carelessly, though he still looked white and dazed. "As you said," added he after a pause, "it's your own look-out!"

The worst of the heat was over at last, but the fever came on the top of it—Reginald Scarlett was one of the first victims, and the disease took hold of him in a way that made his case all but hopeless from the first. For two days he had lain at death's door; and then, all at once, he took a turn for the better.

Now that the danger was apparently over, and the end of the week come, Gordon, who had been watching his cousin's progress with the greatest anxiety, felt that he might safely pay a flying visit to Sylvia.

On his return he broke in upon a group of officers who were standing together talking in low and earnest tones. There was no play going on, and even the gayer spirits seemed quiet and subdued. As he entered they all fell silent. A sudden foreboding seized him.

"Can you fellows tell me how my cousin's going on?" he asked.

"You haven't been round, then?" asked Captain Lane, the Adjutant, after a marked hesitation.

"No. Is he no better?"

"I'm sorry to say he's had a bit of a relapse."

Gordon went white in a moment.

"There's danger, you mean? Yes, I must go."

He flew round to the hospital, and into the private ward where Rex lay. In low, eager tones he questioned the doctor, then with a sinking heart he looked down upon the worn, white face, and passive form of his cousin. And an agony of grief and regret welled up within him. For Rex was dying—Rex, who had been to him more than a friend or a brother.

Suddenly he moved his hands, and lifted his head. Reginald's voice, weak, yet articulate, fell on his ears.

"Gordon, old fellow, you've got her to think of, you know. She . . . made her choice. I was a bit dull, but I see it all . . . now."

Gordon was on his knees.

"Oh, God forgive me," he muttered. "I might have guessed! I'll never touch a card again."

* * * * *

The "Last Post," sounding across the Parade ground, came to Gordon's ears softened and unreal. The long lingering notes, dying away into silence, seemed like a slow-spoken farewell. Rex lay with closed eyes and a smile upon his lips, for he had got his exchange into a Higher Service.

As Gordon left the hospital some one put a sealed packet into his hand. When he came to open it he found that it contained receipts for all his debts—and upon the sheet of paper enclosing them was written, in his cousin's handwriting:—"For her sake, and for the Family Honour."

DUTCH COURAGE.

BY JACK LONDON.

“JUST our luck!”

Gus Lafee finished wiping his hands and sullenly threw the towel upon the rocks. His attitude was one of deep dejection. The light seemed gone out of the day and the glory from the golden sun. Even the keen mountain air was devoid of relish, and the early morning no longer yielded its customary zest.

“Just our luck!” Gus repeated, this time avowedly for the edification of another young fellow who was busily engaged in sousing his head in the water of the lake.

“What are you grumbling about, anyway?” Hazard Van Dorn lifted a soap-rimed face questioningly. His eyes were shut. “What’s our luck?”

“Look there!” Gus threw a moody glance skyward. “Some duffer’s got ahead of us. We’ve been scooped, that’s all!”

Hazard opened his eyes, and caught a fleeting glimpse of a white flag waving arrogantly on the edge of a wall of rock nearly a mile above his head. Then his eyes closed with a snap, and his face wrinkled spasmodically. Gus threw him the towel, and uncommiseratingly watched him wipe out the offending soap. He felt too blue himself to take stock in trivialities.

Hazard groaned.

“Does it hurt—much?” Gus queried, coldly, without interest, as if it were no more than his duty to ask after the welfare of his comrade.

"I guess it does," responded the suffering one:

"Soap's pretty strong, eh? Noticed it myself."

"'Tisn't the soap. It's—it's *that*!" He opened his reddened eyes and pointed towards the innocent little white flag. "That's what hurts."

Gus Lafee did not reply, but turned away to start the fire and begin cooking breakfast. His disappointment and grief were too deep for anything but silence, and Hazard, who felt likewise, never opened his mouth as he fed the horses, nor once laid his head against their arching necks or passed caressing fingers through their manes. The two boys were blind, also, to the manifold glories of Mirror Lake which reposed at their very feet. Nine times, had they chosen to move along its margin the short distance of a hundred yards, could they have seen the sunrise repeated; nine times, from behind as many successive peaks, could they have seen the great orb rear his blazing rim; and nine times, had they but looked into the waters of the lake, could they have seen the phenomena reflected faithfully and vividly. But all the Titanic grandeur of the scene was lost to them. They had been robbed of the chief pleasure of their trip to Yosemite Valley. They had been frustrated in their long-cherished design upon Half Dome, and hence were rendered disconsolate and blind to the beauties and the wonders of the place.

Half Dome rears its ice-scarred head fully five thousand feet above the level floor of Yosemite Valley. In the name itself of this great rock lies an accurate and complete description. Nothing more nor less is it than a cyclopean, rounded dome, split in half as cleanly as an apple that is divided by a knife. It is, perhaps, quite needless to state that but one-half remains, hence its name, the other half having been carried away by the great ice-river in the stormy time of the Glacial Period. In that dim day one of those frigid rivers gouged a mighty channel from out the solid rock. This channel to-day is Yosemite Valley. But to return to the Half Dome. On its northeastern side, by circuitous trails

and stiff climbing, one may gain the Saddle. Against the slope of the Dome the Saddle leans like a gigantic slab, and from the top of this slab, one thousand feet in length, curves the great circle to the summit of the Dome. A few degrees too steep for unaided climbing, these one thousand feet defied for years the adventurous spirits who fixed yearning eyes upon the crest above.

One day a couple of clear-headed mountaineers proceeded to insert iron eye-bolts into holes which they drilled into the rock every few feet apart. But when they found themselves three hundred feet above the Saddle, clinging like flies to the precarious wall with on either hand a yawning abyss, their nerves failed them and they abandoned the enterprise. So it remained for an indomitable Scotchman, one George Anderson, finally to achieve the feat. Beginning where they had left off, drilling and climbing for a week, he at last set foot upon that awful summit and gazed down into the depths where Mirror Lake reposed, nearly a mile beneath.

In the years which followed, many bold men took advantage of the huge rope ladder which he had put in place; but one winter ladder, cables and all were carried away by the snow and ice. True, most of the eye-bolts, twisted and bent, remained. But few men essayed the hazardous undertaking, and of those few more than one gave up his life on the treacherous heights, and not one succeeded.

But Gus Lafee and Hazard Van Dorn had left the smiling valley-land of California and journeyed into the high Sierras, intent on the great adventure. And thus it was that their disappointment was deep and grievous when they awoke on this morning to receive the forestalling message of the little white flag.

"Camped at the foot of the Saddle last night and went up at the first peep of day," Hazard ventured, long after the silent breakfast had been tucked away and the dishes washed.

Gus nodded. It was not in the nature of things that a youth's spirits should long remain at low ebb, and his tongue was beginning to loosen.

"Guess he's down by now, lying in camp and feeling as big as Alexander," the other went on. "And I don't blame him, either, only I wish it were we."

"You can be sure he's down," Gus spoke up at last. "It's mighty warm on that naked rock with the sun beating down on it at this time of year. That was our plan, you know, to go up early and come down early. And any man, sensible enough to get to the top, is bound to have sense enough to do it before the rock gets hot and his hands sweaty."

"And you can be sure he didn't take his shoes with him." Hazard rolled over on his back and lazily regarded the speck of flag fluttering briskly on the sheer edge of the precipice. "Say!" He sat up with a start. "What's that?"

A metallic ray of light flashed out from the summit of Hali Dome, then a second and a third. The heads of both boys were craned backward on the instant, agog with excitement.

"What a duffer!" Gus cried. "Why didn't he come down when it was cool?"

Hazard shook his head slowly, as if the question were too deep for immediate answer and they had better defer judgment.

The flashes continued, and as the boys soon noted, at irregular intervals of duration and disappearance. Now they were long, now short; and again they came and went with great rapidity, or ceased altogether for several moments at a time.

"I have it!" Hazard's face lighted up with the coming of understanding. "I have it! That fellow up there is trying to talk to us. He's flashing the sunlight down to us on a pocket-mirror—dot, dash; dot, dash; don't you see?"

The light also began to break in Gus's face.

"Ah, I know! It's what they do in war-time—signalling. They call it heliographing, don't they? Same thing as telegraphing, only it's done without wires. And they use the same dots and dashes, too."

"Yes, the Morse alphabet. Wish I knew it."

"Same here. He surely must have something to say to us, or he wouldn't be kicking up all that rumpus."

Still the flashes came and went persistently, till Gus exclaimed :

"That chap's in trouble, that's what's the matter with him ! Most likely he's hurt himself or something or other."

"Go on !" Hazard scouted.

Gus got out the shotgun and fired both barrels three times in rapid succession. A perfect flutter of flashes came back before the echoes had ceased their antics. So unmistakable was the message that even doubting Hazard was convinced that the man who had forestalled them stood in some grave danger.

"Quick, Gus," he cried, "and pack ! I'll see to the horses. Our trip hasn't come to nothing, after all. We've got to go right up Half Dome and rescue him. Where's the map ? How do we get to the Saddle ?"

"'Taking the horse-trail below the Vernal Falls,' " Gus read from the guide-book, "'one mile of brisk travelling brings the tourist to the world-famed Nevada Fall. Close by, rising up in all its pomp and glory, the Cap of Liberty stands guard——'"

"Skip all that !" Hazard impatiently interrupted. "The trail's what we want."

"Oh, here it is ! 'Following the trail up the side of the fall will bring you to the forks. The left one leads to Little Yosemite Valley, Cloud's Rest and other points.'"

"Hold on ; that'll do ! I've got it on the map now," again interrupted Hazard. "From the Cloud's Rest trail a dotted line leads off to Half Dome. That shows the trail's abandoned. We'll have to look sharp to find it. It's a day's journey."

"And to think of all that travelling, when right here we're at the bottom of the Dome !" Gus complained, staring up wistfully at the goal.

"That's because this is Yosemite, and all the more reason for us to hurry. Come on ! Be lively, now !"

Well used as they were to trail life, but few minutes

sufficed to see the camp equipage on the backs of the packhorses and the boys in the saddle. In the late twilight of that evening they hobbled their animals in a tiny mountain meadow, and cooked coffee and bacon for themselves at the very base of the Saddle. Here, also, before they turned into their blankets, they found the camp of the unlucky stranger who was destined to spend the night on the naked roof of the Dome.

Dawn was brightening into day when the panting lads threw themselves down at the summit of the Saddle and began taking off their shoes. Looking down from the great height, they seemed perched upon the ridge-pole of the world, and even the snow-crowned Sierra peaks seemed beneath them. Directly below, on the one hand, lay Little Yosemite Valley, half a mile deep; on the other hand, Big Yosemite a mile. Already the sun's rays were striking about the adventurers, but the darkness of night still shrouded the two great gulfs into which they peered. And above them, bathed in the full day, rose only the majestic curve of the Dome.

"What's that for?" Gus asked, pointing to a leather-shielded flask which Hazard was securely fastening in his shirt pocket.

"Dutch courage, of course," was the reply. "We'll need all our nerve in this undertaking, and a little bit more, and," he tapped the flask significantly, "here's the little bit more."

"Good idea," Gus commented.

How they had ever come possessed of this erroneous idea, it would be hard to discover; but they were young yet, and there remained for them many uncut pages of life. Believers, also, in the efficacy of whiskey as a remedy for snakebite, they had brought with them a fair supply of medicine-chest liquor. As yet they had not touched it.

"Have some before we start?" Hazard asked.

Gus looked into the gulf and shook his head. "Better wait till we get up higher and the climbing is more ticklish."

Some seventy feet above them projected the first eye-bolt. The winter accumulations of ice had twisted and bent it down till it did not stand more than a bare inch and a half above the rock—a most difficult object to lasso at such a distance. Time and again Hazard coiled his lariat in true cowboy fashion and made the cast, and time and again was he baffled by the elusive peg. Nor could Gus do better. Taking advantage of inequalities in the surface, they scrambled twenty feet up the Dome and found they could rest in a shallow crevice. The cleft side of the Dome was so near that they could look over its edge from the crevice and gaze down the smooth, absolutely vertical wall for nearly two thousand feet. It was yet too dark down below for them to see farther.

The peg was now fifty feet away, but the path they must cover to get to it was quite smooth, and ran at an inclination of nearly fifty degrees. It seemed impossible, in that intervening space, to find a resting-place. Either the climber must keep going up, or he must slide down: he could not stop. But just here rose the danger. The Dome was sphere-shaped, and if he should begin to slide, his course would be, not to the point from which he had started and where the Saddle would catch him, but off to the south toward Little Yosemite. This meant a plunge of half a mile.

"I'll try it," Gus said simply.

They knotted the two lariats together, so that they had over a hundred feet of rope between them; and then each boy tied an end to his waist.

"If I slide," Gus cautioned, "come in on the slack and brace yourself. If you don't, you'll follow me, that's all!"

"Ay, ay!" was the confident response. "Better take a nip before you start?"

Gus glanced at the proffered bottle. He knew himself and of what he was capable.

"Wait till I make the peg and you join me. All ready?"

"Ay."

He struck out like a cat, on all fours, clawing energetically

as he urged his upward progress, his comrade paying out the rope carefully. At first his speed was good, but gradually it dwindled. Now he was fifteen feet from the peg, now ten, now eight—but going, oh, so slowly! Hazard, looking up, from his crevice, felt a contempt for him and disappointment in him. It did look easy. Now Gus was five feet away, and after a painful effort, four feet. But when only a yard intervened, he came to a standstill—not exactly a standstill, for, like a squirrel in a wheel, he maintained his position on the face of the Dome by the most desperate clawing.

He had failed, that was evident. The question now was how to save himself. With a sudden, catlike movement he whirled over on his back, caught his heel in a tiny, saucer-shaped depression and sat up. Then his courage failed him. Day had at last penetrated to the floor of the valley, and he was appalled at the frightful distance.

“Go ahead and make it!” Hazard ordered; but Gus merely shook his head.

“Then come down!”

Again he shook his head. This was his ordeal, to sit nerveless and insecure, on the brink of the precipice. But Hazard, lying safely in his crevice, now had to face his own ordeal, but one of a different nature. When Gus began to slide—as he soon must,—would he, Hazard, be able to take in the slack and then meet the shock as the other tautened the rope and darted toward the plunge? It seemed doubtful. And there he lay, apparently safe, but in reality harnessed to death. Then rose the temptation. Why not cast off the rope about his waist? He would be safe at all events. It was a simple way out of the difficulty. There was no need that two should perish. But it was impossible for such temptation to overcome his pride of race, and his own pride in himself and in his honour. So the rope remained about him.

“Come down!” he ordered; but Gus seemed to have become petrified.

“Come down,” he threatened, “or I’ll drag you down!” He pulled on the rope to show he was in earnest.

"Don't you dare!" Gus articulated through his chattering teeth.

"Sure, I will, if you don't come!" Again he jerked the rope.

With a despairing gurgle Gus started, doing his best to work sideways from the plunge. Hazard, every sense on the alert, almost exulting in his perfect coolness, took in the slack with deft rapidity. Then, as the rope began to tighten, he braced himself. The shock drew him half out of the crevice; but he held firm and served as the centre of the circle, while Gus, with the rope as a radius, described the circumference and ended up on the extreme southern edge of the Saddle. A few moments later Hazard was offering him the flask.

"Take some yourself," Gus said.

"No; you. I don't need it."

"And I'm past needing it." Evidently Gus was dubious of the bottle and its contents.

Hazard put it away in his pocket. "Are you game," he asked, "or are you going to give it up?"

"Never!" Gus protested. "I *am* game. No Lafée ever showed the white feather yet. And if I did lose my grit up there, it was only for the moment—sort of like seasickness. I'm all right now, and I'm going to the top."

"Good!" encouraged Hazard. "You lie in the crevice this time, and I'll show you how easy it is."

But Gus refused. He held that it was easier and safer for him to try again, arguing that it was less difficult for his one hundred and sixteen pounds to cling to the smooth rock than for Hazard's one hundred and sixty-five; also, that it was easier for one hundred and sixty-five pounds to bring a sliding one hundred and sixteen to a stop than *vice versa*. And further, that he had the benefit of his previous experience. Hazard saw the justice of this, although it was with great reluctance that he gave in.

Success vindicated Gus's contention. The second time, just as it seemed as if his slide would be repeated, he made a last supreme effort and gripped the coveted peg. By means

of the rope, Hazard quickly joined him. The next peg was nearly sixty feet away; but for nearly half that distance the base of some glacier in the forgotten past had ground a shallow furrow. Taking advantage of this, it was easy for Gus to lasso the eye-bolt. And it seemed, as was really the case, that the hardest part of the task was over. True, the curve steepened to nearly sixty degrees above them, but a comparatively unbroken line of eye-bolts, six feet apart, awaited the lads. They no longer had even to use the lasso. Standing on one peg it was child's play to throw the bight of the rope over the next and to draw themselves up to it.

A bronzed and bearded man met them at the top and gripped their hands in hearty fellowship.

"Talk about your Mont Blancs!" he exclaimed, pausing in the midst of greeting them to survey the mighty panorama. "But there's nothing on all the earth, nor over it, nor under it, to compare with this!" Then he recollected himself and thanked them for coming to his aid. No, he was not hurt or injured in any way. Simply because of his own carelessness just as he had arrived at the top the previous day, he had dropped his climbing rope. Of course it was impossible to descend without it. Did they understand heliographing? No? That was strange! How did they——

"Oh, we knew something was the matter," Gus interrupted, "from the way you flashed when we fired off the shotgun."

"Find it pretty cold last night without blankets?" Hazard queried.

"I should say so. I've hardly thawed out yet."

"Have some of this." Hazard shoved the flask over to him.

The stranger regarded him quite seriously for a moment, then said:

"My dear fellow, do you see that row of pegs? Since it is my honest intention to climb down them very shortly, I am forced to decline. No, I don't think I'll have any, though I thank you just the same."

Hazard glanced at Gus and then put the flask back in his

pocket. But when they pulled the double rope through the last eye-bolt and set foot on the Saddle, he again drew out the bottle.

"Now that we're down, we don't need it," he remarked pithily. "And I've about come to the conclusion that there isn't very much in Dutch courage, after all." He gazed up the great curve of the Dome. "Look at what we've done without it!"

Several seconds thereafter a party of tourists, gathered at the margin of Mirror Lake, were astounded at the unwonted phenomenon of a whiskey flask descending upon them like a comet out of a clear sky; and all the way back to the hotel they marvelled greatly at the wonders of nature, especially meteorites.

NUMBER SEVEN.

BY ARTHUR HOBSON QUINN.

“WELL, I think it's a shame if he makes the crew, that's all.”

The president of the sophomore class gazed from his window in Baird House out into the quadrangle.

“Sometimes, do you know, you make me quite tired, Jack. Not always, but just sometimes,” said a deep voice from the couch. “You haven't got a thing against him that you could put into words.”

“I don't need to,” answered Upton. “You only have to look at him once and hear him talk. He's a mucker, that's all. There he is now. You can see that green and red shirt of his from here.”

“His clothes have nothing to do with his rowing,” said King. “Besides, you don't know Kelly. He's not such a bad sort after you get to know him.”

“Thanks, I don't care to try,” Upton said loftily. “There are some things not worth doing. It's bad enough to have such a fellow in the class without having him row on the crew. The other classes will guy us to begin with, and then—why, hang it, he might make the 'varsity some day, and that would be nice, wouldn't it?”

“There have been 'such fellows' on our athletic teams before now,” said King solemnly.

“Yes, there have,” assented Upton, “a good deal too many of them. I'd rather lose with a gentleman's team any day than win with the miscellaneous assortment we've put out

some years ; but there never has been one just like Kelly. You remember the exhibit of table manners he gave us at the freshman dinner last year, don't you ? The story he told and the song he sang ? ”

“ Yes, they were pretty tough,” King admitted. “ I remember, too, that he stood in the doorway and held the sophs back till we had the place barricaded, and that no one else cared for the job, either.”

Jack Upton flushed. That was always a sore subject with him, because he had been nearest the door when the sophomores made their rush, and he had not exactly risen to the occasion.

“ Oh, he's strong enough,” he said grudgingly.

“ Yes, and that's what counts with the coach, and not his name or his clothes or his pocket-book ; and I for one think he has the right to row in his class crew as much as any of us,” said the captain decisively.

Upton did not agree with him, but as he could not think of any particularly good argument, he kept quiet. He was not a cad, although he might become one in time ; at present he was merely suffering from an exaggerated sense of the importance of himself and of everything with which he was connected. He took his office very seriously, much more so than the class did, and his most insistent desire was that everything in which the class took part should be conducted in a proper manner. It hurt him therefore very much that such a man as Kelly should be selected to row in the class races, which were to come off soon.

He was strengthened in this feeling by the knowledge that nearly all the class agreed with him in his dislike of Kelly, and it was one of the sorrows and the puzzles of his life that his chum, Gordon King, whose birth and breeding were perhaps better than his own, should tolerate Kelly, and even defend him. He did not see that it was just because King was so sure of his standing that he could afford to disregard it. Upton had not arrived at that state. He was at times so conscious of his social position that it hurt him.

The subject of Kelly suggested the coming race to him, and after a few moments' silence he said impressively :

"Do you know, Gordie, I think we're going to win that race."

King smiled. "You're an optimist, Jack," he said. "That would be too good. If we beat the juniors, I'll be more than satisfied, but the seniors are too many for us. They've won the cup for two years now, and they won't lose it in their last race, you may be sure. Why, they average twenty pounds more than we do."

"Yes, I know," replied Upton, "but we—I mean you have the best form on the river. I haven't watched you every day from the bridge for nothing. The seniors break in the middle, but number seven takes the stroke from you and hands it back like a dream, and the boat goes along without a bit of jerk."

King smiled again. "Kelly has been rowing at number seven all this week," he said.

"I know it," answered Upton, a little nettled. "I never said he wasn't a good oar. You don't seem to understand my position at all, Gordon." He tried to look judicial.

The unconscious subject of their conversation was meanwhile moving in the direction of the dining-hall. He felt physically very well after his spin on the river and the bath and rubbing down, and an atmosphere of peace and contentment with the world had settled upon him. These periods of happiness came more frequently now than they had done for many months past, and although he did not analyse the feeling very thoroughly, he knew that its beginning had dated from the time when the coach had picked him from candidates for the sophomore crew, and had put him first at bow and then at number seven.

It was the first recognition Kelly had had from class or college since he had entered it. He was the first of his family to go to college, and he had, in consequence, a good deal of ignorance to lose when he arrived. He had not had even the training of a good school, for he had been prepared by

a tutor, and everything he did in the first few months was a mistake.

He had plenty of money, and he began to show it on the first day. He came out to the university from town in an automobile. He took the best rooms in the dormitories, and filled them with furniture which was the talk of the place for days. He wore clothes which his tailor had made under protest, and the number of his suits became a subject of derisive discussion. He had a theory that open-handed familiarity was the essence of good-fellowship, and when Upton glared at him after a particularly jovial slap on the back, he inquired in a friendly way if he were sick. He had given himself a month to become the most popular man in his class, and inside of a week the college had decided that he was a blot on the landscape.

The discovery of his real position was not made for some time, but when it came at last it came suddenly. In fact, it was thrust upon him. In the very beginning fraternities had meant nothing to him, but he soon became aware of the handsome club-houses in the neighbourhood of the university, and he noticed that the leaders of his class were joining the societies. So, in the innocence of his heart, he approached Upton one day after chapel, in the hall, and sticking his finger under the Alpha Psi pin which shone on his classmate's vest, he said calmly :

"Say, Upton, what's the name of your frat.?"

Upton jumped back as if Kelly had struck him, and buttoned his coat quickly. Then he said icily :

"I don't care to talk about such matters, Kelly."

"Oh, excuse me; I didn't think you were so touchy!" Kelly said, as Upton moved away. "I'm thinking of joining a frat., and I wanted to know all the names of them."

The result of this episode was a council of war among certain members of the two lower classes and the birth of a brand-new fraternity, to be known as Rho Sigma Epsilon, the sole aim and object of which was the initiation of Kelly. The next day he received a note, written in red ink and

ornamented plentifully with skulls and cross-bones, directing him to be in the north-east corner of Woodland Cemetery at midnight, to be initiated into "the ancient secrets and customs of Rho Sigma Epsilon."

He was on hand at the appointed time, clad, as the note had further directed, in a tennis coat and a straw hat, although the snow was on the ground. Suddenly, at the stroke of midnight, he found himself surrounded by a troop of grinning spectres, and from that time until four hours afterward, when they left him in a remote portion of the suburbs with his mouth full of soap and quinine, he went through some of the hardest moments of his life. Yet through it all he was comforted by the thought of the next day, and by the prospect of wearing a pin like the rest of the fraternity men.

When morning came, Rho Sigma Epsilon had disappeared from the face of the earth. As the day wore on and no welcoming greeting was extended to him, as his questions in regard to the fraternity were met by stares or smiles, the truth began to dawn on him, and the bitterness of the dawning was deep. He could not tell who his tormentors had been, and his hatred took in every one. Above and beyond the rest he hated Upton, for he suspected him, wrongly as it happened, of having been the instigator of the trick.

The first effect of the awakening was that he returned to the society of those he had known in the city before he came to college. They were not particularly choice people, but they were better, he thought, than the snobs of his class, who would not give him a fair chance; and yet, strange to say, he could not feel the same pleasure in this companionship that he once had found. He realised this only at times and half dimly, but the feeling grew; and this, together with the pressing request of the dean, turned him finally to his work. He began to make recitations instead of flunking them; and although he never shone in the class-room, he showed a good record to his surprised and delighted family at the end of the year.

Just as he had sought the acquaintance of the men in

his class at first, he shunned them now. He meant to be dignified in his conduct toward them, coldly dignified, and he succeeded usually in being gruff. The result was the same, however, and he went through the first half of his sophomore year almost alone.

To those who thought about the matter at all, it was a source of wonder that Kelly stayed in college. It was sometimes a wonder to himself. He stayed partly because he hated to acknowledge to his family that their attempt and his had been a failure, and partly because, in spite of the bitterness, the slights, and the loneliness, he had grown so fond of the place that he could not leave it. He separated in some curious way the university from the men who composed it, and the love and loyalty he might have given to individuals he centred in the college itself.

She was his *alma mater*, he felt, as much as any one's, and often when he sat alone on the bleachers and watched the football eleven win their famous victories, he dreamed vague dreams of doing something great some day for her which should show his fellows what a mistake they had made. And when, one day, defeat came, suddenly and unexpectedly, from a college hitherto despised, a feeling he did not define caused him after the game to buy the largest bunch of ribbon he could procure, and wear it as conspicuously as possible.

It is a question how long this feeling of loyalty might have lain dormant before it prompted him to action, if one day something unusual had not happened. He was walking over to College Hall when he heard his name called, and turning, he saw King behind him. The latter simply said, "Are you going over to College?" and walked with him, but it was sufficient to make Kelly almost tremulous with pleasure, for King was the idol of his class.

When they reached College Hall, King said :

"By the way, Kelly, why don't you come out for the class crew? We need men, and I think you might make it."

"Why—why, I never thought of it," Kelly stammered. "I've never rowed at all."

"Oh, that's all right; you come out," said King; and although Kelly had vowed to himself over and over again that he would never do anything for the class, he found himself the next day at the boat-house. The men were friendly enough, partly on account of King's attitude toward him, partly because some of the most observant had noticed the change which time had made in Kelly himself, and he began to taste for the first time the pleasures of the companionship which had come as a matter of course to the rest.

The day after King's conversation with Upton, the crew was finally selected, and Kelly was picked for number seven. The interval before the class races was not long, but it seemed ages to Kelly, and when the morning of the eventful day dawned, not even Captain King felt more anxious than he.

Five o'clock came at last, and the usually quiet waters of the river echoed to the tooting of the tugboats which some of the more enthusiastic classmen had hired, and to the cheers from the larger crowd on the bank near the finish of the two-mile course. One after another the crews shot up the river to the starting-point, and Kelly heard the seniors cheering them as they passed. Then, just before the cries blended indistinctly, he heard his own class cheer for King, and he saw the captain's shoulders twitch and felt him quicken the stroke a trifle.

"It means something, even to him," Kelly thought, with a smile.

Then the stake-boat was reached, and the final directions were given.

"Remember, fellows," Ewing, the coxswain, said, "'take it easy' means to spurt, and 'hit her up' means to slow down a bit. We're going to keep even with the juniors and win second if we can. That's all."

There is a strain about the opening of a football match, when the men are waiting, with their hands on their knees, for the ball to be kicked; there is a moment before the start of the hundred yards' dash when feelings grow tense, but these are nothing to the strain on the nerves of a crew just before the

start. Kelly sat with his eyes fixed upon the captain's back, and with every muscle tightened, breathing slowly and deeply, and praying that it would begin.

Then the megaphone was turned toward them, and the voice of the referee floated over the water :

“Are you ready?”

Ewing answered ; then there came a loud noise, and Kelly was rowing with all the strength he had in him. He felt unconsciously that their start had been a good one, and when he finally dared take his eyes for a second from the heaving back in front of him, he saw that they were in the lead. To their left, half a length behind, were the seniors, and to the right, a little farther in the rear, were the junior crew with the freshmen overlapping them. This state of affairs was too good to last, he felt sure ; the seniors would catch them in a few moments, but to his delight he saw that his crew, instead of losing, were gaining inch by inch. Their good form and perfect following of King's stroke were winning from the superior weight of the older crews.

At the end of the first mile there was clear water between them and the seniors, and Kelly felt that unless something happened, the race was theirs. And then, just as the bend in the river came and they shot under the arches of the railroad bridge, the unexpected did happen. In the half-moment of darkness he heard a cry from King, he felt something graze his oar, and when they flashed into daylight again, he saw that the captain's outrigger was broken and that his oar was gone.

Then King turned to Kelly and said quickly, “Keep it up, Jim, we've got to win ! I'm going overboard.” The next instant the captain was out of the boat, swimming vigorously toward one of the tugs.

Kelly was not a quick thinker, but his training told, and he regained his stroke almost immediately after the shock of King's dive. There had been a moment of lost time, however, and he saw dimly that the seniors were ahead and the juniors even with them. It was almost madness to hope to catch the leaders with only seven men in the boat, but Kelly decided at

once that he was going to do it, not for himself or for the class, but for the sake of the man who had just gone overboard and who had called him "Jim."

He gave a quick look at Ewing, who was braced hard in his effort to steer the overbalanced boat; he glanced once more at the senior crew, and then he began to raise the stroke. They had been rowing thirty-six strokes to the minute, and he increased the number first to thirty-seven and then to thirty-eight. He looked no more at the other crews, but he watched the coxswain's face, and the joy there told him they were gaining.

Upton, who had been following the race on a bicycle, spurred ahead after the accident, and soon the crowd at the finish knew what had happened. One thought was uppermost in the mind of every sophomore: "Will Kelly lose his head?" They never doubted his strength, but they knew it had not been strength but form and skill which had kept their boat in front during the first mile, and now the man who had helped most to give that form and skill was sitting helpless in the judges' boat. Then another thought came suddenly to about a dozen of them, and they seized their bicycles and hurried up the bank toward the fast approaching shells.

The crews were within a quarter of a mile of the finish now, and the seniors were still slightly in the lead. Ewing was already as hoarse as a rook, but Kelly understood his whisper, and the stroke went up to thirty-nine. Foot by foot they began to crawl up on the seniors. It was indeed rather curious, when Kelly thought of it afterward, that he never bothered about the junior shell, racing along beside them. Any question of second place had vanished from his mind. The race must be won; he had decided that when King jumped overboard. Then Ewing leaped from his seat.

"Take it easy, boys, oh, take it easy!" he screamed.

The seniors were spurting. The captain of the 'varsity was stroking them, and behind him were seven men, four of whom had helped to win the cup for the past two years, and were not going to lose it without a struggle.

Kelly hesitated a moment. He felt that he was going as fast as he could, and that if he did more something would break—somewhere. Then suddenly amid the rush of blood to his brain he heard the quick, sharp yell of his class, with “Kelly! Kelly! Kelly!” after it. Like a flash the life came back to him, and the whole boat quivered with his leg-drive as he sent the stroke to forty.

They were passing the outer fringe of the crowd, and the shouts became confused. Through the tumult he heard Ewing's voice as from a great distance :

“We're even with them! They're splashing! They're breaking in the middle! Take it easy, take it easy, and we'll win!”

Whether he spurted or not, Kelly did not know. There was what seemed an age of silence and of desperate effort, and then a roar that deafened him, and he knew the race was over.

For a moment his brain was stupefied; and then, as his eyes grew clearer, he saw the dancing figures on the bank and heard the yell of his class ringing through the air. A few moments more and the boat reached the slip, and it seemed as if a hundred hands were trying to lift him out and up in the air. He noticed with a queer little feeling that he was on Upton's shoulder, and then at last came that for which he had been waiting. The crowd parted to left and right; another group of dancing, shouting men mixed with his own, and above them in the air sat King. The captain leaned over and grasped Kelly's hand in his.

“Thank you, Jim, I knew you'd do it,” he said.

THE KNOCKING GHOST OF DHUARRAGHIL.

A TRUE STORY.

BY E. E. CUTHELL.

“TURN him out ! Turn him out, or he’ll tell another !”
The scene was the mess-room of the Royal Scilly Islanders, at Ballybrumagem ; the hour, that idle ten minutes just before the “Roast Beef of old England” bugle, when a certain person who shall be nameless finds employment for the idlers in the ante-room.

Woodlyne was sitting on the low sill of a window which looked on to a bed of scarlet geraniums, carefully tended by the mess sergeant, and an oasis of colour in the glaring white expanse of the barrack square. “Turn him out !”

The temptation was irresistible. A couple of fellows rushed forward, and tilting Woodlyne up by the legs pitched him backwards out of the window. The game was infectious ; others rushed up and turned out the turners-out, only to be rejected in their turn, till the flower-bed was a seething mass of scarlet mess-jackets and tartan overalls, while Woodlyne and his two assailants, extricating themselves from the bottom of the pile, rushed round into the ante-room to revenge themselves on those within. Thus it would have gone on merrily, *ad infinitum*, like a stage army marching across the boards. But the mess bugle sounded. There was a truce, a re-adjusting of collars and ties. The Scilly Islanders went in to dinner, and some mess-waiters came and removed the *débris* of scarlet geraniums.

The Major came in late, for he was on duty, and per-

ceiving, though soup was nearly half done, the signs of a subsiding tumult, asked :

"Well, what's the Boy been doing now?" In those days if there was anything up among us youngsters of the Scilly Islanders, "the Boy," that broth of a boy, was sure to be at the bottom of it. There was a chuckle all down the table, a grin of suppressed merriment, a grin that meant that some good joke was on.

"He says he's seen a ghost!" said some one. There was another grin, and the little major was heard to inquire quietly,

"Did the ghost catch that salmon I saw your servant carrying across to the kitchen, Woodlyne? Eighteen pounds if it's an ounce, I bet."

"Eighteen and a half, sir," corrected the Boy, his face flushing, half with pride and half with annoyance. "You fellows may take the ghost or leave it," he added, "as you please, but I'll be hanged if you shall taste the fish! I'll send it over to my company, or——"

"Did it get its back up, pretty dear! It's a shame it is, its first salmon, too!"

"And its first ghost!"

The grin grew to a laugh at the Boy's expense. "B. company 'll be having a fine dinner off that big fish to-morrow," he muttered, applying himself sulkily to his dinner and refusing to be drawn any more.

The "Boy" was a smart lad, fresh from Eton,—over bumptious, though, and with any amount of belief in himself, but the kind of fellow who would make a smart soldier in time, when his conceit was knocked out of him,—which we youngsters, his seniors, were proceeding to do without loss of time. We played no end of practical jokes on him, and laid traps for him by the score. It was easy work enough, for Woodlyne had a very quick temper, and never failed to rise when drawn. But I must say for him, that he quieted down again as quickly as he flew out at a fellow, and never bore any malice. But it took him down a good deal and

did him much good. He was fast turning into a very nice boy indeed, smart all round,—as, indeed, witness his first salmon. But then to come back with not only a big fish, but with a big lie about having heard a ghost,—and in the month of May, too, when no ghost who respects himself is ever on view except at Christmas!

For this was the Boy's version of the story. He had been over fishing at Dhuarraghil Castle, a tumbledown old place on the Claney, where the agent had given the regiment leave to fish. His car-driver, misunderstanding him, had gone home without waiting for him, leaving the Boy stranded for the night fifteen miles from barracks.

"And a pouring wet night it came on to be, and growing as black as pitch soon after I'd landed that big fellow. What was I to do? The castle's only a square ruined tower, several stories high, barely weather-tight. But it was better than the caretaker's cabin alongside, with the pigs and the poultry and the swarms of children. So I decided to make what meal I could out of the family potato pot, and then to take up my quarters for the night in the castle. But the old lady in charge did not seem to see it.

"'Shure an' it's himself 'll be knockin' o' ye up,' she muttered, crossing herself.

"That idiot of a car-driver had put me out a little, I don't mind confessing; and I made some remark about proverbial Irish hospitality, and to the effect that, 'if ever a place looked like absenteeism, Dhuarraghil did.' The old crone shook her head mournfully.

"'Sorra a sight ha' we seed o' the masther since '98,' she remarked.

"'That's so long ago,' I replied, 'that he's not likely to disturb me now.'

"'The saints presarve ye! Have ye niver heard tell how, whin the bhoys were out in '98, they seized the castle while the masther was away at Ballybrumagem fair, and thin whin he came home, and knocked at his own front door, shot him down from above as dead as a door nail? But ye may

hear him rappin' away anny night, all the same, loud as the Day o' Judgment,' she added.

"The old lady was 'left talking,' like the House of Commons on a long sitting, and I turned into the castle, and after a fair meal of eggs and potatoes——"

"And an extra pull at your whiskey-flask," interrupted one of Woodlyne's audience. "Be truthful, Boy, if you're nothing else."

"He heard the ghost come knocking rat-tat-tat," added another of the audience. "Boy, what a thing it is to have been born a cockney! You were dreaming of the postman coming down the street."

After this no one would hear any more of the story, and the Boy walked off in high dudgeon.

Edmiston looked into my room that evening late, as he was going to turn in.

"Look here, old chap; I've put in for two days' leave to go fishing at Dhuarraghil. It's not worth the bother of the long drive for one day, and after the haul the Boy got to-day——"

"To say nothing of the ghost," I laughed. "I'm with you!"

I can still see that blessed river, the Claney, as it looked that lovely May morning. I see it gliding like molten silver in the grey dulness of a typical "soft" Irish day, stealing peacefully under the shadow of the birches, a fringe of cuckoo pints and tall grasses on its banks, and the purple line of the Drumgoole mountains filling in the horizon. I see the delicious eddies beyond the great boulders, the still oily pools under the high banks, the golden gravelly shadows! I recollect I had just got to the big pool by the bend of the stream, and was grumbling that the day was too still for sport, when there came a stir in the air and a rustle among the leaves. The pool was in first-rate condition. Noiselessly I peered over the bank, and noted an eddy behind the rock. For a few seconds the water looked rough, as the draught struck it. Now was the moment.

Hardly had my fly touched the water when a small wave rose, and away went the line.

"Let 'um have all he wants for the first toime," whispered the keeper; and I let out some seventy yards. "Don't put the check on 'um till ye find 'um takin' your line out for the second toime, yer honour," he added.

The fish, evidently a large one, had hooked himself, and now the fun began. My tackle was sound and in five minutes I had him lying on the grass beside me. The keeper, wiping the gaff with which he struck him the first chance I gave him, remarked admiringly:—

"Lord love ye, yer honour! Twenty pounds an' more if he thraws one ounce!"

We fished all the rest of the afternoon, but with no such a kill as this. However, we caught trout enough for supper, and a smart shower drove us to take shelter in the castle at dusk.

While Mrs. O'Greoghan was engaged in culinary mysteries, we explored the old place. It looked innocent enough in the summer twilight: a great square tower rising from the water's edge on a steep hill and surrounded by ruined out-houses which looked as if they had been fired. The front door opened into a great square hall, and we deposited our trophy on a crazy old table in the middle of it, a table whereon, to judge by the bloodstains, Woodlyne's big fish, or perhaps even the mysterious "mather" himself, might have lain in state.

The old lady crossed herself as she passed by with our supper.

"I wouldn't be afther layin' o' him on *that* table, yer honour, not if——"

The creaking of the great staircase drowned the rest of her remark, as we followed her up to the room overhead, which we had chosen for our bivouac, because there was more glass in the windows and a few tables and chairs.

After our meal and a smoke, Edmiston encamped on one of the latter, rolled up in a rug, and in defiance of the rats

I chose a corner of the floor. At intervals the rain ceased, and a watery moon peeped in at the window, and across her face flew hurrying rain-clouds and whirling bats.

"I shall make for the pool below the bridge first thing at daybreak," was Edmiston's last remark, after which I fell asleep, to dream of struggling with leviathan salmon.

Suddenly I was awake, as I imagined, by my soldier servant hammering at the door.

Knock ! Knock ! Knock !

"All right, O'Leary," I muttered sleepily ; "has the 'dress' gone?"

No answer.

Knock ! Knock ! Knock !

"Come in !" I muttered with some asperity.

Knock ! Knock ! Knock !

"Come in, you fool, and stop that row ! Is it a fire alarm?" I added, with my nose out of my rug.

Then Edmiston stirred.

"What on earth are you making all that row—Hullo ! Who's there? Come in !"

No answer ; but again came the knocking—slow, solemn, re-echoing all through the deserted building.

We both sat up and looked at each other in the dim light.

Knock ! It came again.

"I'll be hanged if I'm going to stand this !" cried Edmiston. "Where's the gaff? They shall find the brutal Saxon is not to be hoaxed in this way !"

He pulled on his books and off he sped. I followed. We ran down the crazy stairs, across the hall, and through the door out into the uncertain moonlight.

All was silent.

"You run round one way, and I the other, and we'll catch them, and just give them a fright," whispered Edmiston.

I skirmished round the outbuildings, stumbling over rocks and stones, peering into dark corners and stalking shadows. On the hill-side behind the castle I met Edmiston.

"Seen any one?"

"No ! and you ?"

"Not even a ghost !"

Knock ! Knock ! came again, faintly, but distinctly.

"Let's go and draw them," I suggested.

The door of the O'Greoghan mansion was ajar. We stumbled over a pig on the threshold and some hens on the floor, but, as far as we could judge from the mass of humanity recumbent on two bedsteads and on the ground, and from the sound of much snoring, we found the family all at home and asleep.

"Ugh !" exclaimed Edmiston, as we emerged into the night air, drawing a long breath, "we'd better lie in wait."

Knock ! Knock ! Knock !

It sounded nearer this time, and involuntarily we glanced at the front door of the castle, which we had left open in our headlong chase.

"Hush !" said I, "let's get into the shadow of those buttresses and watch."

Stealthily we crept to our hiding-place. It was close to the door ; we mounted guard, one on one side and one on the other, and commanded the approach up the steep road from the river. The moon went behind a cloud, and it grew very dark.

We waited some time ; a gentle rain began to fall again. There was not a sound to be heard, except the ceaseless murmur of the stream below. I began to feel chilly and sleepy. Edmiston probably did the same.

"I'm not sure this little game is worth the candle," he began.

"And the keeper's to call us at four !" I yawned.

"I vote we——"

Knock ! Knock ! Knock !

It sounded quite close this time—at the very door indeed. It certainly was quite uncanny. We looked up and down and round. There was no one to be seen.

Knock !

We both rushed through the open door into the hall. Had

it been anything human we must have got him, for the moon suddenly shone out clearly and lit the place up. But it was quite still and empty.

"Well! I'm——" exclaimed Edmiston, when—Knock! Knock! Knock! again, and nearer still.

We both glanced at the big table in the middle of the hall, and then rushed up to it.

On it lay——our big fish, just where we had placed him. But he was in his death throes. His eyes were glazed, and the blood had congealed round the gaff wound, and his gills opened and shut spasmodically.

Suddenly he made a great expiring effort; he must have jumped many a salmon leap in fine style in his time. But now he raised himself with difficulty, and——

Flop! Flop! Flop! went his mighty tail down on the table. The table and the empty hall together acted as a vast sounding board, and the successive flops echoed through the deserted building.

We looked at each other, and then laughed. Then we looked at the fish again.

"I reckon we've scored off the Boy twice over!" quoth Edmiston.

Knock! went the salmon's tail again. It was his last effort, and then he lay quite still—dead.

THE GOLD SEEKER'S STRATAGEM.

BY CHARLES E. BENT.

HE who ardently wishes to know what Californian mining camps were like in the early years of gold discovery should visit the upper valley of the Yukon in Alaska, where that picturesque epoch of which Mr. Bret Harte has so often written is reproduced on a smaller scale. Here are veritable Poker Flats, Sandy Bars, Roaring Camps, Truthful Jameses, Ah Sins, and Bill Nyes. Nor are vigilance committees and trials, presided over by Judge Lynch, wanting to complete the picture. The discovery of rich placer diggings and surface gold in alluring quantities has, in a measure, revived in the far North the life of the California of the '49 era.

The "Dutch Flat" of this new Eldorado is a mining camp known as Forty Mile, situated on the Yukon at the mouth of Forty Mile Creek. Forty Mile, at last advices, had a population of nearly four hundred miners. There were a hundred and sixty shanties, three stores, and five "saloons." No white woman had arrived there. It was a pandemonium of rough bachelor life.

If by any chance an obnoxious character appears in town, he is given short notice to "quit," and it is highly unsafe to disregard such an intimation of public opinion. Such men have been seen leaving Forty Mile on the run, though they have no civilised place for a city of refuge. No railroad, no telegraph, penetrates to within a thousand miles of Forty Mile.

Two small steamboats ply on the Yukon, one owned by

a trading firm, the other by Captain Healy, the pioneer of Forty Mile. These craft have somewhat reduced freight rates, yet flour at Forty Mile is worth from twelve to fifteen dollars per hundred; bacon, thirty-five cents per pound; sugar, thirty; pork, thirty-five; beans, forty cents per quart; thick woollen undergarments, seventeen dollars per pair; rubber boots, twenty dollars; and other necessities in proportion.

The mining claims about the place yielded wonderfully well last season. Experienced miners who worked hard sometimes took out from two to three hundred dollars' worth of gold in a day. Indeed, no one would work the "dirt" if it were not rich in gold, for the working season is little more than three months in a year, beginning with the middle of June. Water and timber are scarce, and frost puts the miners to great difficulty.

The country on all sides around Forty Mile is a mere mossy, stony *tundra*, or barren plain, with occasional patches of stunted fir and spruce, very little of which grows large enough for timber. Hares are abundant, and also a species of grey partridge. Rarely a moose is seen, and occasionally a caribou or a bear.

Some of the miners occupy themselves during the winter in trapping marten and black-cat for their fur; but most of the men who remain find work either in hewing or whip-sawing, or hauling plank for the sluice-boxes of the next season, or in clearing the moss from tracts of gravel which are supposed to contain gold.

The thick moss must be cleared off so that the summer sun, which scarcely sets for several weeks, shall thaw the ground. The earth is frozen to a great depth—fifty feet, some say—but if the beds of moss are removed, the ground will thaw during June, July, and August to a depth of five or six feet. Where there is "pay dirt," the miners work as deeply as the gravel thaws, and then wait until another summer enables them to go deeper.

All sorts and conditions of men make their appearance at

Forty Mile, and among them some desperate characters. Two of this stamp, styling themselves brothers, and giving the name of Sterrett, came last June. Whether they had come up the Yukon from Juneau or from St. Michael's no one could find out.

They pretended to take a claim and work as miners, but really did nothing. Presently there were thefts from shanties and the Sterretts were suspected. A deputation of miners called on them and informed them that Forty Mile would prove a "bad climate" for them after twelve o'clock that day. As they feared a bad climate, they hastened, escorted by the deputies, aboard Captain Healy's steamboat, which was about leaving on a trip up the Yukon.

At a landing which the boat made for fuel, ten miles above Forty Mile, the two outlaws sneaked ashore. One of them had a gun, and what they wanted of the weapon was known to 'Dustr'ous Bob the same day.

'Dustr'ous Bob was a miner, nineteen years of age, who worked a solitary claim some fifteen miles above Forty Mile, at a bar where a small creek joins the Yukon. He had come all the way from Pennsylvania, and somewhere on his route had picked up a worthless sort of companion, a little older than himself, known as "Dudsy." The two took a claim at Forty Mile and worked together: or rather 'Dustr'ous Bob did the work and Dudsy the playing and loafing.

As Bob was seen toiling early and late, the miners had christened him Industrious Bob, which was soon shortened to 'Dustr'ous Bob. He was really a very honest, good-hearted lad, striving to get out a handsome sum in gold to take home to his widowed mother and his younger brothers and sisters.

The older miners often advised Bob to part company with Dudsy, but Bob had become attached to the fellow, and made no complaint, even when his laziness became notorious.

Their claim at Forty Mile did not prove as profitable as many others, so in September the two partners bought an Indian canoe and went prospecting on the river for several

weeks. Just before the Yukon froze, they found this old creek bar, overgrown with moss, and after "cradling" there for a day or two, staked a claim for the following season.

During the winter they lived in a shanty at Forty Mile; but 'Dustr'ous Bob went along the ice on the Yukon to the new claim every few days when the weather was favourable, and did much work there, "stripping" moss, clearing away scrub and hewing out stuff for sluices. He also hunted occasionally, and shot three caribou deer.

In February Dudsy was taken ill of something like pneumonia, and in spite of all that 'Dustr'ous Bob could do for him, died in the course of twenty-four hours.

Some of the rougher miners were inclined to make a jest of 'Dustr'ous Bob's grief for his "pard," and told him bluntly that he was well rid of him. But we never feel well rid of anything we love. 'Dustr'ous Bob followed his comrade sadly to his grave in the snow, and gave him the tribute of a kindly tear.

Though now feeling very lonesome, Bob continued his preparations for working the new claim, and went up there early in June to labour hard for weeks. Having built a small shanty on the river bank near by, he now came down to Forty Mile only to buy provisions. To such of his friends as inquired how he was prospering, he replied that he was doing better than during the previous season.

Bob was hard at work on the windy morning, late in August, when the Sterretts were ordered out of Forty Mile. At about eleven o'clock that forenoon, as he was heaving gravel into his sluice-spouts, at about a hundred and fifty feet from his solitary shanty, he suddenly heard a slight noise in that direction and saw the older Sterrett, whom he had seen at Forty Mile, standing at the door, pointing a carbine at him.

In his simplicity 'Dustr'ous Bob at first thought that the fellow was merely playing a prank.

"Hullo, Sterrett!" he called out. "What are you up to there?"

"You shut up and stand quiet where you are," replied the desperado savagely, and 'Dustr'ous Bob then knew he was in danger of being murdered.

He had scarcely time to realise this, when he saw the younger Sterrett come out of the shanty. In one hand he carried the old rubber boot in which 'Dustr'ous Bob kept his gold, and in the other, Bob's carbine and small piece of bacon, which happened to be all the meat Bob had in the house.

"You scamps!" shouted the young miner. "Let my gold alone!" and in his excitement he started to run toward them. Then the elder Sterrett fired, possibly not with intent to kill, but sending a bullet so close that 'Dustr'ous Bob felt the wind of it.

Springing in another cartridge, the rascal raised the gun as if to shoot again, but lowered it at a word from his "pal." Bob was too prudent to risk his life by advancing farther. The robbers then walked down to the river bank, launched 'Dustr'ous Bob's canoe, paddled across the river, and thence continued on up-stream. They had taken all the loose gold, which Bob had cradled thus far, about thirteen pounds' weight, and his gun in the bargain.

As the poor fellow saw them paddling coolly away, and realised the full extent of his loss, he was nearly crazed by grief and rage. But his wits soon returned. At the landing-place lay a small raft of hewn spruce which he had recently towed across the river, for adding to the length of his sluice-spouts. He determined to make his way down to Forty Mile on the raft and summon aid.

Embarking, he poled out into midstream and began the voyage. But despair of being able to induce the miners there to follow up the robbers soon fell upon him. His gold, representing all his hard labour, seemed to be hopelessly gone!

Was there then nothing that he could do, save endure it? 'Dustr'ous Bob was not so much a brilliant youth as one of the slow and sure class. But an idea for the recovery of his

gold suddenly flashed into his mind—an idea which his hunting experiences of the previous winter suggested to him. It would be a hazardous exploit to undertake, but he was in a desperate mood.

Instead of floating down to Forty Mile, 'Dustr'ous Bob now worked the raft across the Yukon, and landed on the opposite bank, at a point about two miles below his claim. He had resolved to follow the rascals up-stream, alone and without weapons of any kind, relying on a stratagem which had occurred to him. From his knowledge of the river he reckoned that the Sterretts would keep near this shore during the entire day, in order to avoid the strongest current.

The footing along the river bank was rough, and the country somewhat encumbered by scrubby black growth; but having taken his resolution, 'Dustr'ous Bob went on quite rapidly, threading his way among the thickets running much of the distance, and occasionally cutting off a bend.

It was now afternoon, and till sunset the resolute youngster scarcely slackened his pace except for a moment, here and there, to obtain a view along the river ahead.

A little before sunset he caught sight of the canoe and the robbers; they were paddling along the south shore about as fast as a man could walk. For nearly an hour thereafter he was able to keep them in sight, without betraying himself to them; and as dusk fell he closed up nearer. Before long the scoundrels landed, and Bob presently discerned the glimmer of a camp-fire on the bank some distance ahead.

Feeling certain now that they had camped, or at least stopped to prepare food, Bob advanced cautiously until he had come within one hundred yards. The Sterretts were toasting the scrap of bacon. He saw them devour it, and made pretty sure that they had no other provisions. This gave him new hopes that his stratagem might prove successful.

He had some fear that they might re-embark, after satisfying their hunger, and go on during the night, but soon 'Dustr'ous

Bob saw that they had taken the canoe out of the river, and that the younger man was grubbing up moss for a bed before the fire. Probably they did not feel very apprehensive of pursuit, having seen their victim on the raft, floating slowly down the Yukon toward Forty Mile.

After some thought the young miner came to the conclusion that his stratagem would best be practised in the early morning. He therefore remained quiet, and the coolness of the night kept him very wide awake. Shortly after midnight there were, for an hour or two, northern lights so very bright that 'Dustr'ous Bob could see almost as well as by day; and moving about among the low, green copses, he laid his plans.

He crept to an outstanding thicket of low, green spruces two or three hundred yards distant, and up the river from the place where the Sterretts lay, and he also looked out a route where, under cover of other thickets, he might pass around from the first thicket to the river bank, near the camp.

When day had fairly broken, he nerved himself for a dangerous venture, which he knew would probably cost him his life if it failed.

After a sound night's rest, the two rogues roused up, and while the elder re-kindled the fire, the younger, drawing on his boots, took up a bacon bone and remarked, with an oath, that this bone seemed to be all that they had for breakfast.

"We should be able to catch some fish, or else shoot something," grumbled the other, in reply.

And at about that time, by a singular coincidence, they both heard the peculiar "cough" or hoarse whistling grunt of a caribou at a little distance, and glancing in the direction of the sound, they saw the thick, green brush of the spruce copse sway and rustle.

"Sh," whispered the one at the fire. "D'ye hear that? Caribou, sure! Out there in that brush! Quiet now, and we'll have him. You work out there, still as you can, and

I'll follow along the bank up-stream, so as to catch a shot at him back of the thicket, if you start him out."

In a trice they had taken their carbines, and were moving stealthily toward the thicket. With vast caution they approached, the one crawling directly toward the copse, the other making around it to the east and south.

But meantime 'Dustr'ous Bob was skulking rapidly in his socks from thicket to thicket. He soon gained a point near the river, not fifty yards from where the smoke of the crackling camp-fire was rising. Here he lay watching till he saw the Sterretts vanish in the thicket.

Now was his opportunity! Scudding along the shore, partly hidden by the bank, he slid the canoe into the water, and put in the paddles. Then he crept to the fire and took the heavy old rubber boot from the moss bed. In less than half a minute he was back in the canoe, pushing it down-stream close to the bank.

The Sterretts meantime remained peering about the thicket. But after some ten minutes spent thus they came to the conclusion that the caribou had taken fright and escaped. Cursing their luck, they walked slowly back to the camp-fire.

Not till they reached it did they suspect the ruse that had been practised upon them. By that time 'Dustr'ous Bob was nearly half a mile away, and moving swiftly across toward the north shore.

Then the bullets flew fast, and the oaths faster still! The oaths, indeed, may have disturbed the accuracy of the shooting. Rage and chagrin are not conducive to good rifle practice. One ball struck the canoe, but the others skipped harmlessly past it.

Late the following evening, 'Dustr'ous Bob appeared at Forty Mile, and entering one of the boarding shanties, ate so prodigious a supper of bacon, biscuits, cheese, and canned goods, that the proprietor felt justified in demanding an eighth of an ounce of gold dust, or two dollars and a half for it, which was duly weighed out from the old rubber boot.

The young miner then carried the boot, for safer keeping,

into Captain Healy's cellar, which was then the "safety deposit vault" of Forty Mile, and almost immediately afterward fell asleep on a bench. He was wakened with difficulty at nine o'clock next morning.

During the forenoon he bought a new carbine at the store and went back to his claim, and it is characteristic of him that he mentioned the exploit which he had performed to but a single acquaintance.

A BRAVE LITTLE BRITISHER.

AN INCIDENT IN THE WAR OF 1812.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

THE brave little Britisher was not a man. Neither was she a girl. She was a small schooner, named the *Simcoe*, and commanded by Captain Richardson. She traded on Lake Ontario. Her enemies, with cordial admiration, called her the "brave little Britisher"; but she called herself a Canadian.

The year was 1812, and the United States had gone to war with Great Britain. Canada, which seemed the most vulnerable portion of Great Britain's territory, was invaded by American armies. At the beginning of the war a small Canadian fleet, having its headquarters in the harbour of Kingston, held command of Lake Ontario. This was a serious check to the American advance; and under the guns of Sackett's Harbour, on the other side of the lake, the energetic Commodore Chauncey was hard at work building a stronger fleet to overwhelm his Canadian rivals.

In an incredibly short time the American ships were afloat, and the Canadian fleet, hopelessly overmatched, withdrew sullenly to the shelter of the Kingston ramparts.

Just at this time occurred the episode which forms the subject of my story. The story was told me by old Captain Delancey, a retired officer of the Royal Navy, who was a member of the *Simcoe* *Bride's* crew when she performed her memorable feat.

Delancey had been through many a thrilling adventure, and

his breast, on state occasions, was graced with a perfect galaxy of medals earned by his heroism in battle. But of none of his experiences would he speak with such pride as of his first introduction to an enemy's broadsides, when, in the mad little Canadian schooner, he ran the gauntlet of the American fleet outside the harbour of Kingston. He told the story in some such words as these.

When we sailed from the head of the lake, bound for Kingston, we had not the remotest idea that Chauncey had got his ships out of Sackett's Harbour. Richardson, our gallant but reckless captain, had declared that the Americans couldn't have their fleet ready for service for a month yet, and what Richardson said we always took as settled. We bowled along down old Ontario, in perfect confidence that the lake was still under our own control.

When we caught sight of a squadron tacking off Kingston we at first had no thought of danger. We fancied the ships were our own, and sailed on merrily to meet them.

"We'll run into Kingston harbour in style," said Captain Richardson, "convoyed by His Majesty's ships."

We were at this moment about four miles from the entrance to the harbour, and the squadron was strung out along the whole distance. Just as we were nearly abreast of the first ship the mate yelled, "They're not our ships at all! They're Yanks!"

"By gum!" said Captain Richardson, with a little laugh, "you're right. Boys, we're caught!"

As the words left his mouth the American flag fluttered to the masthead of the nearest ship, and a round shot ricocheted across our bows, as a signal that we should heave to. Half a minute more and the same flag was flying over every ship in the squadron.

"Shall we heave to, sir?" asked the mate, in a sulky voice. Yielding was little to his taste; but had not the captain acknowledged that the case was hopeless, when he said, "We're caught?"

But our captain, whatever he may have said, was not yet caught. The *Simcoe* could not fight, that was certain. She carried but five of a crew, all told; and we had but one old musket among the whole of us. She could not get away by beating back against the wind into the open lake, for she was already in the midst of her enemies, and would be picked up with the greatest ease if she should attempt any such manœuvre.

There was only one chance for us; and that looked so slim that it was just no chance at all. It was to pile on all sail and fly straight on for the harbour, running under the guns of every ship of the squadron. And this was just what Captain Richardson undertook to do. The way we cheered him showed that we were all of one mind in the matter.

When every sail was pulling for all it was worth, the *Simcoe* flew like a bird, for we reckoned her at that time the speediest craft on the lake. The enemy, meanwhile, had been watching us in a puzzled kind of a way. They didn't want to knock a little vessel like the *Simcoe* all to pieces with big round shot, when they knew she couldn't fight and felt sure she couldn't escape. In fact, they never dreamed of our trying any dodge so wildly reckless as that which we were now putting to the test.

But when Captain Richardson ran the British flag up to his peak, right before their very noses, and when the *Simcoe* had raced safely past the two first ships of the fleet, their eyes were suddenly opened. She must be on some very important errand, they concluded, or she would not take such ridiculously heavy risks; and "Take her or sink her. She carries despatches!" was the signal that flew from the commodore's masthead.

I've been in some pretty hot fights, as you know; but as I look back on that run past the *Chauncey's* broadsides, it seems to me that that was about the hottest experience of all. The American guns were not very heavy metal, but they were long range and well served, and if it had not been for the *Simcoe's* really remarkable speed, her small size and the

choppy, pitching sea that was running, we'd have been knocked into splinters five times over.

I wouldn't like to say how many of the round shot tore their shattering way through our bulwarks, and through our hull, too, but fortunately above the water-line. Our rigging got cut up shockingly, but the canvas was new and strong, and the round holes did not much interfere with the *Simcoe's* sailing capacity. It was little less than a miracle, the way our spars escaped; but escape they did, till nearly the end of the scrimmage.

If a boom or a gaff had gone, the game would have been up at once; for one of those big brigs would have just laid us aboard and threatened to blow us out of the water if we did not at once surrender. As it was, not one of them got close enough to us to handle us in that uncereemonious way. As each came tacking toward us we gave it the slip with great ease, having the wind just where we wanted it. We took our peppering as best we could, and plunged on into the next circle of fire.

By this time we were getting very near Kingston and safety. We could see the people out on the shore and wharves, watching our performance; and pretty large we began to feel, I can tell you. But what tickled our pride most of all was the action of our enemies. After we had succeeded in passing the first three or four ships, the Americans got interested in our adventure, and every ship, when run clear of her broadsides, treated us to a rousing cheer.

Just as we thought ourselves safe, however, the end came. First a round shot carried away our main boom; but we were already rounding to enter the harbour, so we didn't despair. We just cleared away the wreck and kept on, though with greatly diminished speed.

And now the nearest ship, which happened to be Chauncey's flag-ship, began to overhaul us rapidly.

"But we'll make it!" shouted Captain Richardson.

We shouted in response, and I loaded up our solitary musket to fire a salute to the foe. The next moment a big

round shot crashed aboard us, and went out below the water-line, tearing a mighty hole. The green lake water fairly spouted in.

We had not many minutes to float, but those few were enough to carry us fairly inside the harbour, and under the fire of Kingston guns. And there the brave little *Simcoe* sank.

She went down with her flag floating; and as she sank we cheered like mad, and fired our musket in heroic defiance.

We heard answering cheers from our friends on shore, and other answering cheers from the decks of the nearer American ships. Then I felt the cold waves washing over me; and the next I knew we were being picked up by boats from shore, which had put off to our help before we went down.

As for the *Simcoe*, it was not deep water where she sank, and a few weeks later she was raised and refitted, to live out a long term of usefulness on old Ontario.

A WHALE-CHASE.

BY JAMES COOPER WHEELER.

THE whaling-barque *Avola*, from New Bedford and eighteen months out, was "gamming" the *Martha*, also a whaler, but flying the British flag and from Sydney, Australia. They had met off the coast of New Guinea for a friendly chat, as it were. It was a good sperm-whaling ground, and although the interchange of courtesies was perhaps warmer than usual on such occasions, because of the international character of the meeting, the crew of each ship kept a sharp lookout for whales.

The captain of the *Martha* had come in his boat to "gam" the skipper of the *Avola*, old Zenas Bourne, of Nantucket, who had spent fifty years chasing leviathans. The Englishman brought his own boat crew, so that if whales were¹ raised during his visit he could participate in the chase. According to the custom in "gamming" on the whaling-grounds, Mr. Brown, the first mate of the *Avola*, had gone in his boat to visit the first officer of the *Martha*.

Three bells—half past nine—in the morning watch had just been struck by the helmsman. There was scarcely steerageway on the *Avola*, and the rays of the fierce tropical sun melted the pitch between the deck planks. Joe Stoddard, second mate, and Anton Madeira, boat-steerer, stood on the mainroyal-yard sweeping the surrounding waters with binoculars in search of whales. At the foreroyal two of the crew were standing their regular masthead duty, and keeping as keen a lookout as the officers.

The captains paced the quarter-deck. The Briton was

tall, bearded, and muscular ; old Zenas, undersized, sinewy and clean-shaven, made two steps to Captain Tugwell's one. They resembled a bull and a panther caged together. The restless manner in which they prowled back and forth was suggestive of confined wild animals.

Now and then the American captain went to the side and sniffed the air with a curiously alert expression on his swarthy old face. He seemed to scent prey. The stalwart Englishman watched his actions with an intelligent eye and a certain air of expectancy.

After one of these trips to the rail Captain Bourne called out in his terse, incisive tone, "Pass the word to Mr. Morrison to come aft !"

In a moment a sturdy American sailor came from forward of the tryworks.

"Tom," said Captain Bourne, meeting him at the fife-rail, and speaking so that Tugwell did not hear, "get the starboard boat in the water and stand by with the crew. I smell whales, and this 'lime-juicer' shall not get away first if they're raised."

Tom Morrison, who was fourth mate and the captain's boat steerer, met the old man's eye with perfect understanding, and answered, "Aye, aye, sir !"

Captain Bourne returned to his guest, and Tom swung himself by the swifter to the star-board roof of the after house. "Lay aft, Billy Barker !" he called.

A short, thick-set young fellow came aft on the keen run. Together they lifted the two tubs containing the coiled whale-line into the captain's boat, which already swung outward from the davits.

Barker seized the water-keg, leaped to the deck, and while he went with it to the butt, the boat-steerer got his "irons"—harpoons and lances—and stowed them in their cleats in the boat. As the keg was filling, Barker crammed a small canvas bag with ship bread, and then put both bag and keg in the stern-sheets.

"Stand by the starboard boat-falls !" sang out Morrison,

The three other men of the captain's crew, all Americans, had been watching Morrison and Barker with lively interest. They bounded aft, and in a twinkling were at the falls.

"Lower away!" said Morrison. Barker and he stepped into the boat as it fell smoothly toward the water. When it met the wave Morrison deftly unhooked the bow tackle, and Billy did the same with the one by the after thwart.

"Stand by to take the short warp!" called the boat-steerer. It shot from his hand and was caught by "Big Jonas," the Maine man who pulled the midship-oar. The boat ranged along-side, and Morrison leaped into the chains. As he scrambled up he added, "Stay with her, Billy."

The fourth mate quietly walked forward again. He spoke briefly to Jonas, who seemed to pass the word to "Black George," the bow-oarsman, and "Rhody," who manned the tub thwart.

Morrison himself pulled the harpooner-oar when the captain lowered, and Billy Barker was the best stroke that sailed out of New Bedford.

Captain Tugwell had an eye like a hawk, and observed these significant preparations with a complacent grin. He rested easy in the knowledge of the possession of the strongest boat crew out of Sidney, and although he was perfectly aware of the purpose of Captain Bourne, he did not doubt that, if the two started anywhere near even, his boat would reach the whales ahead.

The next moment his sharp eye caught sight of a sudden commotion on the *Martha*, half a mile to leeward.

Then both captains straightened and grew rigid, while a sonorous voice came down from the foreroyal: "Thar she blows! Thar she blows! Tha-a-r she whitewaters!"

Old Zenas's voice cut the air like a fife as he threw back his head to gaze aloft, but although it made the blood tingle in the veins of every man in hearing, it was perfectly steady and contained:

"What do you make of them spouts, Mr. Stoddard? And how do they bear?"

"Sperm-whale, sir ! Three points off the lee bow ! About two miles ! Thar she whitewaters ! It's a lone bull breaching, sir."

"Aye, aye ! Lay down from aloft, sir ! Ship-keepers stand by ! Lower away all !"

At the first hail Captain Tugwell's crew of brawny beef-eaters, all old whalemén, had steamed aft and entered their boat, which lay ahead of the American craft that Barker now held close under the chains. Tugwell, like a gallant fellow, hesitated between his sense of fairness and his keenness to get away, and he and the Nantucket man leaped over the side at the same instant. The Yankee boat crew seemed to occupy their places by magic, and as each skipper gripped his steering-oar, Tugwell called to Bourne :

"It's a fair start, sir ! I'll give you a dinner if I don't make fast first !"

"Same here !"

The oar blades dipped, and it seemed as if the ship suddenly shot away from them. The whale lay ahead, and at the apex of a triangle of which the other two points were the *Avola* and the *Martha*.

So the struggle—the whale-chase—had begun.

For a hundred and twenty-five years or so Americans and Britons have been trying each other's mettle in various ways, and here was as pretty a contest of nerve and muscle as had ever occurred between them. Both were "crack" crews. The boats were of the same model, and within ten pounds of equal weight. The English sailors, man by man, seemed bigger and stronger. The American crew had pulled together eighteen months, the others ten. Both captains were seamen, and true men from the soles of their feet to the arch of their skulls.

Side by side and not ten feet apart they pulled, and neither forged a foot ahead of the other. The water was as smooth as a pond, and if there was a difference, Tugwell's men made a hair the more splutter.

Billy Barker's wholesome, tanned face was as calm as the

sea, and all New Bedford would have cheered to see him. He gripped the water firmly, barely covering his blade, pulled strongly, and gave a vicious ting at the end of the stroke that made the boat jump.

Rhody, Big Jonas, Black George and Tom Morrison knew how to pull, too. The oars, three to starboard, two on the port, rose and fell as truly with the stroke, and feathered as rhythmically as if the same powerful hand controlled all. There was no hurry, no excitement, all the men smiled, and save for the resistless rush of the boat and the foamy curl each side of the bow their power would have gone unsuspected.

Before half a mile was passed the complacent smile had disappeared from the English captain's features. No one was a better judge of men and boats, and what he saw made him anxious. His face became grim, and he turned again to his own crew:

"A little quicker, and steady! My men, steady!"

Then Billy Barker saw the form of the after oarsman of the English boat draw ahead of him bit by bit. He turned his head, and met the grey eye of Captain Bourne. Persistent use of the telescope had set it deep in his head, and although it was glowing like a live coal, Billy somehow caught coolness and comfort from it.

"They've got more beef, Billy," murmured the old man softly, "and they'll be sorry for it after they keep up this lick another mile. Steady, boy! We're doing well."

Captain Tugwell drew a length ahead, and stayed there. The Americans pulled like a well-oiled machine, and still wore their same happy look. They gazed at the old man in the stern-sheets. They knew him and were easy, although each, despite seeming carelessness, would have given his "lay" sooner than be beaten.

The whale was in full sight from the boats, although only the captains, who faced the chase, could see him. He had ceased "breaching" and lay at ease, enough of his broad, black hump showing above the blue water for a full ship's company to dance a "fore and after" on.

The boats from the *Martha* had got away before those from the *Avola*, and were coming down the farther line of the triangle. Captain Bourne saw that his mate, Jesse Brown, headed them. These boats would have been nearer the whale but for the duel between the captains. As it was, the superior crews of the latter had wiped out the advantage in the start.

It was now only a question whether Tom Morrison or Captain Tugwell's boat-steerer would "break blackskin" first. Apparently the odds were against the American. But wait a bit! The whale was now only half a mile away, and the two boats were coming up abaft his fin. It would not do to cross his line of sight, which, fortunately for whalemén, is restricted because the eyes are deeply sunken in the head.

"A leetle more ginger, Billy," whispered Captain Bourne.

It seemed to Barker that he had been waiting half his life for this permission. He gathered himself and laid back on his oar with a smooth, fluent heave that, as his fellows took the new motion, seemed to lift the boat over the water instead of forcing her through it. But Captain Tugwell was not the man to be caught napping. He heard the bitter grind of the oar looms on the rowlocks, and with a quick glance backward he leaned to his sturdy fellows, and cried :

"*Now* PULL!"

Hurrah! Here was the tug of war! Those brawny British giants straightened themselves in a simultaneous flash, and in a twinkle both crews were in a contest that would have disabled ordinary or untrained men by the very violence of the exertions. The pretence of indifference was thrown off the faces like a discarded mask, and now these Anglo-Saxons, American and British, locked their jaws like sprung steel traps. Tugwell's black beard bristled with eagerness, and as much of his countenance as could be seen was crimson. He, too, had abandoned all affectation of unconcern, and his gaze at the American was a defiant glare.

Old Zenas's attitude would have made a superb marble of

Action. The pose suggested a leap forward, and he seemed only to hold himself back by the grasp of the corded left hand on the steering-oar. His face was livid, and his eyes were no longer burning coals, but intense lightning as they flashed over his own crew to the British boat, and beyond to the whale.

That second of time which Barker had captured sent the American boat ahead with a leap that nearly closed the gap. Clink ! clank ! went the leathered looms in the iron rowlocks. The waves turned white and hissed as the bows cut it—and inch by inch the Americans gained ! Tugwell shifted his grip of the steering-oar from his right hand to his left hand, but before he had completed the action old Zenas had reached forward and, falling into Barker's motion, pushed on the after oar as Billy pulled. The Briton executed the same manœuvre two heart-beats later, but he had been forestalled.

Now Jonas, the raw-boned giant from Maine—who pulled the midship-oar—caught a glimpse of the nose of the British boat. His stanch ash blade tore through the water with a force that tried its virtue. Then Rhody saw the British bow, and at last it came in Billy Barker's line of vision. The "lime-juicers" were being fairly outpulled !

Neither crew took time to think of the whale in this desperate work. Their backs being to it, they could not see, and anyway it was the business of the captains to look after that part of the affair ; theirs to win the race. But the leviathan was close ahead now, and the lightning from Bourne's eyes began to play in fiercer gleams. Suddenly he stood erect.

"Avast pulling !"

The stroke was arrested in mid-air, and with a common impulse the men looked over their shoulders.

"Thar goes flukes !" added the Yankee captain.

What they saw was a huge ebony column sixty feet high a hundred yards in front. The bull had literally stood on his head preparatory to sounding, and as they gazed he passed out of sight, waving in farewell a pair of flukes twenty-five feet broad.

The British boat shot ahead ten feet, and now its crew lay on their oars. Tugwell was delighted. This incident had altered the complexion of affairs, and given him another chance. Neither skipper could foretell with certainty when and where the bull would reappear. The oldest whalerman might be forgiven for making an error in this matter. Nothing but absolute divination could determine it.

And it was mightily important. The nearest boat would probably be the one to get "fast," and the first "iron" driven into the blubber decided not only the captains' dinner and the rivalry of the crews, but the ownership of the whale. For no matter who kills, the law of the whaling-ground says that "he who strikes first shall possess."

That black tower of flesh and fat represented a hundred barrels of oil; a matter of four or five thousand dollars, and one not to be underrated by a thrifty Nantucketer on the fifteenth "lay." Zenas Bourne had pitted his brains against the wits of sperm-whales almost from his birth. Was he, who could follow a "school" across the trackless ocean as a hound trails the deer, to be beaten now by a "lime-juicer" from Sydney? He tried, as it were, to fill his veins with oil and his brain with spermaceti in the effort to creep inside the skin of that hundred-barrel bull. Presently he said softly, "Pull, all!"

Captain Tugwell had taken position a quarter-mile beyond where the whale had sounded. The other boats arrived on the scene and stationed themselves behind him.

"Avast! Back water! Look out, Mr. Morrison! Don't peak your oars, my men! Stand by, all!"

Captain Bourne had brought up half-way between the British captain's boat and the spot where they had seen the whale. He reasoned that the bull was not alarmed and had no motive for running away. His keen eye had noted the slight inclination of the flukes, and this gave him the clue to direction. The boat lay, recollect this, stern to Captain Tugwell's.

The vertical sun scorched and roasted; the oily blue water

threw back the heat at the brassy heavens, and the atmosphere between quivered as if on the point of ignition. Ten minutes, fifteen, passed. Each sailor watched along the line of his oar. The eyes of Morrison and the captain devoured all space.

Of a sudden a cyclopean sigh—huge enough to express the lamentation of humanity—quavered at Captain Bourne's back, and Barker, facing that way, saw the square black mass of the bull's head emerge midway between the boats. Old Zenas sprang a foot in the air, and half-whirled, lying back on the steering-oar to bring his boat around. Tugwell's crew had caught the water.

Big Jonas surged on his oar to help the captain overcome the inertia of the boat. She shot swiftly around—more swiftly than he had counted on. The captain overreached, failed to recover, and went overboard with a great splash!

Billy Barker caught the flash of the Britons' oar-blades as his captain's heels passed out of sight. Then the stroke-oarsman rose to the occasion and made himself famous in whaleman song and story, and his memory beloved of New Bedford and Nantucket.

He sprang to his feet, tossing his oar toward his skipper with the same action. Then his hand gripped the handle of the steerage-sweep, and he shouted :

“Give way !”

Rhody, Big Jonas, Black George, and Tom Morrison heard his command, which was half appeal, and met his burning eye.

It was the last chance for the bull whale and the race! They straightway strained on the ash blades until their former efforts were as nothing.

“Steady! Steady there! Stand up, Mr. Morrison!” cried Billy Barker.

Morrison peaked his oar, and the next instant braced his knee in the “clumsy cleat,” his harpoon poised above his head. The British boat-steerer, on the other side of the whale, was rising.

"Give it to him!" yelled the stroke.

It was a long dart, but the mate obeyed his subordinate. The "iron" gleamed in the air, and sank—"chock to the hitches"—in the lubber.

"Starn all! We're fast!"

Old Zenas, who had floated on Billy's oar until the whale was killed, said afterward that he'd have gladly remained two days in the water sooner than that the "lime-juicer" should have got his "iron" in first. "If Billy Barker wants berth as third mate next v'y'ge he can sign articles with me," he added.

PETTED BY A PANTHER.

A TRUE STORY.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL T. G. CUTHELL.

THE following veracious tale is intended as a solemn warning against that enormity so frequently practised in youth, and as commonly condemned in mature years, of not getting up when you are called. With the axiom that early-rising folks are conceited up to twelve o'clock and stupid afterwards, I have no sympathy whatever. A long residence in the "shiny East," and many years of compulsory getting up in the small hours of the morning, has impressed upon me the truth about the early bird and its vermicular victim. In the ensuing story you will learn how nearly the early worm caught the late bird.

"The Lambkin" and I were subalterns together in the dear old 150th. "The Lambkin" was only his nickname, which shows how popular he was, for no one but a good fellow ever has a nickname. Had "The Lambkin" been a girl, I am positive his sphere would have been that of an old maid devoted to cats, for, from his first experience of India, it was leopards and panthers that seemed to fascinate him most among all the strange beasts, wild and tame, with which that land abounds.

"The Lambkin's" first introduction to him of the unchangeable spotted coat was I recollect, at a hunt got up at Guramghur by a neighbouring rajah for the delectation of some English globe-trotting magnate whom he delighted to honour. The hunting leopard does not belong to the

cat but to the dog tribe; it is a kind of connecting link between the dog and cat. But it has the dog foot, and not the receding claw of the cat, like the panther, the ounce, or snow leopard, and the hill leopard, all of which are feline. Often in our evening rides near the native city we had met a pair of the rajah's hunting leopards out exercising, led each by two natives by a chain on each side, so that should he make a spring at one the other keeper could drag him off. As we trotted to the *rendez-vous* on the day appointed we came up with a country cart, in which the leopards were seated, their backs to the bullocks which drew it, like male-factors journeying to Tyburn. Each, like merlins in the days of falconry, was closely hooded over the eyes.

When we reached a wide uncultivated plain beyond the city, on which roamed herds of antelope, we halted and scanned the horizon. Ere long we marked the herd, and the bullock cart jolted on its way towards it, over a rough dusty track. We riders kept at a respectful distance on the flank, lest we should scare the game, which, however, took no notice of an accustomed object like the bullock-cart. How graceful and pretty they looked, the spiral-horned black buck, and the graceful does, grazing peacefully among the low scrub, unsuspecting of the approaching danger.

The country cart almost passed the buck, who was half-hidden by a bush, when the native within loosed and unhooded the cheetah.

"Wahan! Dakko!" (Then! Look!) he whispered to him, pointing to the deer.

The leopard opened his blinking eyes, and sneaked down from the cart, watching the deer intently, and creeping slowly toward him, much as you have seen a pussy stalk a thrush upon the lawn. Taking advantage of every bush and covert, and pausing to mark if the game perceived him, the cheetah lessened every moment the distance between them. The instant the black buck raised his bowed head and caught sight of the approaching enemy, a single leap, such as these antelope can spring, would have placed him out of reach of

peril. But he seemed as if paralysed with fear and doubtful which way to fly. In three bounds the cheetah was upon him and had struck him down to the ground with his paw. The keeper now rushed up. But the leopard was as savage and snarly as a cat playing with a mouse. So the native whipped out his knife, and cutting the deer's throat, bled it into a saucer. The delighted cheetah relinquished his prey to lap greedily at the blood, and while so engaged was chained and hooded and led back again into the cart. It was a sight to see once in a way, but it hardly came up to an Englishman's idea of sport.

Our next meeting with a leopard was of a domestic not a sporting character, and happened on this wise. "The Lambkin" and I were ordered from Guramghur up to a hill station on detachment duty. We journeyed thither first by rail, then by *dâk gharny* (a kind of ramshackle bathing machine on wheels drawn by galloping ponies), and at the foot of the Himalayas we mounted sturdy hill *tats* and wound our way up the mountain sides. Half-way up we rested at a wayside bungalow, for the way was long and hot. These lower hot slopes of the Himalayas are the great haunts of leopards, which in the jungle forests feed on deer, monkeys, wild pigs, lizards and birds. As we sat on a kind of rough lawn near the bungalow, refreshing ourselves in the shade, about four o'clock in the afternoon, we saw emerge from the brushwood, at a distance of about a hundred yards, a female leopard and three cubs. They sunned themselves for some time on some rocks, the little ones gambolling like kittens.

"You had better have an eye on your dog," was our host's parting words, as we set off again on our upward ride, "for if there are leopards about, he may get snapped up at dusk under your very nose!"

Poor Spot! "The Lambkin's" white terrier, running gaily at the heels of his master's pony, so pleased to be cool once more, the words rang prophetic of his fate. Not many days after, as we sat in the verandah of the mess bungalow

at dusk smoking, Spot ran out on to the terrace round it. We only lost sight of him for a minute, and then some one saw, or thought he saw, a dark object spring out of a bush, and we all heard a piteous yelp. But, though we hurried to the spot, that was the last we ever saw or heard of poor Spot, except a little white paw found next morning in the jungle, a hundred yards away. After this can it be wondered that "The Lambkin" yearned to slay a panther? One day we got an unexpected chance. We were out shooting small game on the mountain sides, with an army of beaters and three guns, and we were all young and "griffish" (Anglicé "green"). Suddenly a leopard tried to break through the line of beaters, but was driven back and came out in the open. Fearfully excited though I was, I had the sense to restrain myself from firing at him with my gun; but the Irish doctor next me, who was armed only with an old duck gun, blazed away at him with true Hibernian impetuosity and peppered him. "The Lambkin," however, who carried a rifle, killed him. There ensued forthwith a warm discussion as to whom the skin by rights belonged. The pertinacious doctor, however, claimed first blood and carried off the trophy, and a fine large skin it was; it ornamented his bungalow for many a long day. A military outfitter would have charged some £12 for it mounted as a saddle cloth, but in India they can be bought for a pound.

Later on we had still better fun with a leopard. A government reward of five rupees is offered for every one killed by a native. They trap them in strong wooden palisades or cages, made of posts and some seven feet long. They are baited with a bleating kid tied up at the far end. Sometimes they set a gun trap. This is very ingenious. The kid is tied up in a little arbour made of boughs, and the gun set at full cock in front. A piece of strong silk is fastened to the trigger, and to a peg at exactly the distance from which the leopard springs, so that when the gun goes off it shoots him in the heart. This kind of trap is not, however, invariably successful. I heard of one which only wounded the beast, who crawled off

desperately savage, got into a neighbouring stable and mauled and killed a pony and a cow, and was found dead some days afterwards at a distance.

It was in a cage trap, however, that the panther that we hunted was caught. When he was released we rode him on horseback, armed with hog-spears. It was not hard work, as he let the horses come close up to him, but it was a bit dangerous, and one Arab got badly scratched on the flank.

The really good time that "the Lambkin" had among the leopards, however, was when he got six months' leave and departed for the happy hunting-grounds of Cashmere and made the biggest bag I ever heard of. But then "the Lambkin" had the digestion of an ostrich, no liver to speak of, and did not know what fear meant. So he had absolutely no objection to frequenting the low, hot valleys. When he got news of the whereabouts of a leopard, he collected a few of the pariah puppies which abound in all the native villages. Then he had constructed a *machan* or sort of green platform of boughs in a tree near the cheetah's haunt. Here he sat or lay at ease, while on the ground below he had tied up some of the puppies, who cried for their mammas. When at dusk the cheetah came sneaking after them, "the Lambkin" bagged him from overhead.

Upon one occasion, however, he had the tables turned upon him at imminent risk of his life. Having, as he thought, shot a leopard, "the Lambkin" descended from his *machan* and began to search all round for its corpse, but without success. He explored the neighbouring jungle, but in vain. Halting for a moment to consider what on earth could have become of his prey, he was suddenly aware of a slight rustling in the undergrowth behind him. He turned round, and lo and behold! the stalker was being stalked. "The Lambkin" had barely time, ere Spots made his spring, to cock his rifle and put a stop to his further proceedings.

By this time "the Lambkin" had become a good shot, and had a hunter's eyes. One evening, about five o'clock, he was walking through a jungle. During the preceding night he

had heard a leopard about, making a great purring through the forest, and frightening the little "Kharkar" deer, which barked warningly to each other across the valley. As he walked along he happened to look straight ahead, and saw, at some distance, the head of a panther pop out, on hearing him approach, from between the forked branches of a great banyan tree, where the animal was taking a snooze. "The Lambkin" shot him dead. On examining the tree he found it was evidently a favourite resort of the leopard, for the bark was scratched on one side by his paws where he was in the habit of climbing up and down.

But "the Lambkin's" culminating performance was when, like the shepherd lad in Scripture, he slew, so to speak, a lion and a bear. He was walking through the jungle in pursuit of game, when he became aware of a great commotion near at hand, a crackling of branches and the miau-miauing of a young bear. Peering stealthily through the trees, imagine "the Lambkin's" surprise at beholding a black bear half way up a deodar pine, and a leopard on the lower boughs trying to climb after him. Making sure of Spots, as the more difficult to kill, "the Lambkin" accounted for them both.

On that famous Cashmere trip, he secured no less than ten leopards in three months, and, moreover, brought back a young cub as a pet. It was a pretty thing, fawn-coloured with black rings, and about the size of a cat. It subsisted on bread and milk, was devoted to its master and grew apace.

"The Lambkin" and I shared a bungalow. Moreover, in view of a certain bad habit which beset us both, we had made a solemn league and covenant that neither of us would go off to early morning parade without first ascertaining if the other was awake and ready. For old De Bootby, our Colonel, was a frightful martinet about punctuality; and further, there was a quaint, time-honoured custom in the 150th, that instead of having to send in your reasons in writing for being late for parade, you were fined a magnum of champagne at mess.

It was after every one had imbibed for several nights dry Monopole at our expense that "the Lambkin" and I instituted the above-mentioned league for self-defence. And it was as well. For our respective bearers were nearly worn out with trying to induce us to get up, and torn in sunder, poor wretches, between fear of the kicks and maledictions that they received in the performance of their duty, and the explosion of wrath that subsequently descended upon their devoted heads did they fail in the attempt.

One morning in the hot weather (it was 4 a.m. and not yet light) we had to rise for early parade. I was ready first and was out in the verandah about to mount my pony and gallop off to barracks, when I remembered "the Lambkin." I walked round to his bedroom and looked in through the rush screen which hung in the open doorway. On his little camp bed in the middle of the large, bare, white-washed room, lay "the Lambkin" sleeping soundly, and by his side lay something big and tawny. I looked again. It was his pet panther. It struck me as odd, and I entered. As I neared the bed the beast gave a low snarl, and my heart ran cold with horror at what I saw.

The leopard lay at full length licking "the Lambkin's" head just above the temple. What he had probably begun to do in an affectionate manner to awaken his sleeping master, he was now continuing with all the latent ferocity of his cruel nature fully aroused, for he had licked the hair entirely off one side of the head with his rough tongue, and the blood was slowly oozing through the skin.

The animal looked up at me with a snarl at being disturbed, and licked his lips, just like a cat caught stealing cream. For the first time it was tasting blood. I had come in the very nick of time. For it was with the utmost difficulty that I and the terrified servants to whom I shouted, roused "the Lambkin" and got the panther off him. The whole nature of the beast seemed changed. He recognised no one's voice, and slunk into a corner, growling and snarling, with an evil leer in his eye, as if about to spring. In shorter time than

it takes to tell I had loaded a rifle and despatched him then and there.

Ever after that, if "the Lambkin" had any difficulty in waking, we had only to tell him to look out for the panther, and up he sprang in a trice. He had had a lesson, and the panther story became a time-honoured regimental joke.

A NIGHT ON THE BLACK MESA.

BY C. EMMA CHENEY.

THIS is the story the chief engineer told one afternoon when he found his wife and myself on the piazza, half-asleep over our books. We needed waking up, he said.

A score of years ago, when Geronimo was master of New Mexico and the "Bad Lands," I was with a party of engineers surveying the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad from Denver to El Paso. We were running through a deep *arroyo* one day when a small band of Apaches, headed by their chief, bore down upon us. They pulled up their horses and dismounted, regarding us and our instrument with keen curiosity.

The transit-party was well in the lead; Dick Stanley, with the level, and I, with the rod, were perhaps half a mile back. A point had just been taken for the leveller to pass me, when the chief intimated a desire to look through the level. It was a powerful lens, and the chief, looking through it, was manifestly surprised to find me apparently within a little distance of himself, whereas in fact I was some four hundred feet away.

At that moment I thoughtlessly threw the rod over my shoulder with what must have seemed to him a threatening gesture, for he dodged instinctively, then drew back glowering. The braves laughed immoderately at this, and the chief promptly lost his temper. Seizing his Winchester, he started on the run to punish me. Meanwhile I was trying to prove by a series of dumb disclaimers that I had intended him no

harm. Whether my mode of communication was inadequate, or whether my blood was the only cure for wounded dignity, I cannot tell; but the chief was implacable, and I finally drew my six-shooter and held him covered.

He halted at this, and reluctantly suffered himself to be dissuaded from carrying the matter further. He was still very angry, however, and plainly cherished a strong resentment toward me. I paid no attention to his sullen looks, and we proceeded with our work as if nothing had happened to interrupt it. The Indians lingered in our vicinity but a short time, then vanished among the shadows of the black mesa under which we were passing.

On our return to camp that evening, we discovered that an error had been made in marking the stake numbers. I volunteered to go back and undertake the necessary correction, and being detained much longer than I had expected, found myself at nightfall about three miles from camp. It was impossible to make that distance in the dark, and I decided to spend the night on the mesa that rose, dark and solemn, out of the valley near our last transit point. It was a rugged, towering plateau, formed of lava boulders piled one upon another, and sparsely clothed with mesquit or sage-bush of greyish green.

After half an hour spent in exploring the face of the rock, I found at the height of some two hundred feet a small chamber, perhaps eight feet square, made by overhanging boulders. Its front was open, except that a hedge of mesquit served as a complete screen.

I found a smooth spot on the rock floor, large enough for me to lie at length, and made myself as comfortable as the circumstances would allow. The weather had been hot that day, and when I left the surveying-party I had given my cartridge-belt and revolvers to Alonzo—our Pueblo packer—to carry to camp.

The prospect of a long evening of solitude, uncheered by supper, was not altogether pleasant. I wound my watch all too quickly. I tried to whistle, and gave it up. I hummed a

college song ; it fell flat. But I recovered my philosophy at last, and was dozing off when I was brought to my feet by an Apache war-cry. Instinctively I felt for my gun, only to be reminded that I was unarmed and at the mercy of the chief whom I had unwittingly offended.

I knew the Indians must have seen me on the mesa at dusk, and had reasoned that I could not travel far over that steep and rocky ground without a light. I knew there must be many caves like mine, however, and that was my only crumb of comfort.

The call that had roused me was answered promptly by others so shrill, so near, so fiendish that the very air seemed peopled with demons. I made myself as small as possible, withdrew to the farthest, darkest corner of my den, and held my breath to listen.

After that wild whoop and response, the stillness was agonising. I knew that the Indians were having a powwow over my head, and the very fact that I did not hear them was alarming. I had not long to wait in suspense. Soon boulders began to crash down the face of the mesa, passing over my head on their way to the bottom.

It was clear that the Indians had fixed upon my hiding-place within a distance of a few hundred feet, and were sure of their ability to dislodge me by this terrible bombardment. At last it ceased. In the silence I knew the savages were listening with all their acuteness. Soon I heard their voices again and knew that the band had scattered, and puzzled at not having found my hiding-place, were running down the cliff to reconnoitre.

Above, below, up, down, back, and forth, they skulked as stealthily as beasts of prey. Another consultation was succeeded by another attempt to dislodge me by rolling boulders. This was kept up at intervals for hours, until my whole nervous system throbbed with pain.

After a long period of quiet, when the dawn was beginning to streak the horizon and I was taking new courage, an Indian glided out of the shadow and stood just in the opening of my

cave, between it and the hedge of mesquit, almost within the length of my arm.

For one long, long moment he stood there, still, alert, listening. Then he uttered a cry which sounded to me like that of a wild beast.

With all my force I stifled a shriek. My breath came thick, my scalp prickled, perspiration trickled down my face. I had already possessed myself of a bit of rock about the size of a cocoanut,—the only defensive weapon within my reach,—and believing myself discovered, I withheld my hand only till the savage should make a movement toward me.

That I did not yield to the defensive impulse was all that saved me. I closed my eyes for a single instant, and when I opened them the Indian was gone.

It was then broad daylight. I remained quiet for some time, half-stunned and utterly exhausted, waiting for the sun, which I knew to be my best friend.

When at last I ventured to peer out, very cautiously, over the screen of mesquit, I saw, far down the valley near our last transit-point, the friendly figure of Alonzo coming swiftly yet cautiously back on my trail.

Slight as had been the movement I made, he saw me in that instant. Springing quickly up the cliff, he lost no time in strapping my cartridge-belt and revolvers upon me, all the while grumbling in a *patois* of Pueblo, Mexican, and English, about the dangerous folly of going without "tools" in the Apache country. And yet the possession of the means of defence would have made me foolhardy.

Alonzo—once a Pueblo chief, now our useful and ubiquitous packer—had always been my friend. When, at a late hour the previous evening, he learned that I had not returned to camp, he evinced the utmost uneasiness. He sprang up suddenly, seized my defensive outfit, and slipped out of camp, evading the guard. Undoubtedly his quick ear caught that first Apache yell, and he had shrewdly divined my need of a friend.

THE HERO OF THE REGIMENT.

BY CLARENCE MAIKO.

THERE was only one Private Jens Jensen in the United States army, and the officers and men of the—the Regiment of Infantry used to say that it was a very good thing for the service that there was but one. Mind you, they do not say so now, which shows that the opinion of an entire regiment concerning a man may be all wrong. There are plenty of men wearing medals of honour in the army to-day who were never suspected by their most intimate friends of being heroes, and many a gawky recruit lives to give orders to those who laughed at him doing the “balance-step” in the recruit school. The ways of the army do not change, for they are the ways of human nature, and remain the same from generation unto generation.

When Private Jens Jensen swore to bear “true faith and allegiance” to his adopted country, his earthly endowments consisted of a magnificent physique, a Scandinavian brogue, and a determination to carry out all the lawful orders of his superior officers at any cost. In the course of time he lost his Scandinavian brogue, but he kept his superb physique; and the manner in which he held to his determination to obey all orders to the very letter was truly remarkable. Strange to relate, he frequently found himself in trouble because he obeyed orders too well. He often made himself the laughing-stock of the regiment, and he became the despair of his officers.

The first thing a soldier must learn is to obey orders, and

the second is to exercise a certain discretion in doing so. Private Jensen was never able to learn the second.

He distinguished himself on the day he first joined his company by a remarkable performance. While crossing the parade-ground he encountered the adjutant and saluted as prescribed, raising his hand to the visor of his cap. The adjutant suddenly remembered that he had forgotten something at headquarters, turned abruptly on his heel and walked off, neglecting in his haste to return Private Jensen's salute.

Now the orders for saluting are that a private must keep his hand at the visor of his cap until the officer returns the salute or until the officer passes. Private Jensen obeyed orders, and with his hand still raised in salute to the visor of his cap, he marched across the parade-ground to Company F's quarters.

From the porch of the company quarters the members of Company F witnessed the incident, and when Private Jensen reached the quarters he was received by a jeering crowd of soldiers, but he was not disconcerted. He marched through the quarters with his hand raised in salute, unmindful of the laughter of the soldiers. He hunted up the first sergeant, and asked him if he could take his hand down from the visor of his cap. All the explanations of the first sergeant did not make it plain to him that he had any right to let his hand fall from his cap. He took the matter very seriously, and lost much of his respect for the authors of the army regulations in consequence.

A recruit gets his character from what he does when he first joins his company, and after this incident Private Jensen was considered a joke. But he was never molested or persecuted by his comrades, for his magnificent physique and his willingness to "go outside" and give personal satisfaction to any one who demanded it commanded respect.

There was a certain officer of Fort McBride who was in the habit of ignoring the challenge of a sentry. He liked to sneak up to a sentry in the dead of night and surprise the

man, whom he often accused of being asleep on post. Men dreaded to "do a guard" when this officer was the officer of the day, because they were likely to get into trouble.

Every soldier knows that there is an order in the Manual of Guard Duty for sentries to fire on persons who ignore a challenge, and every soldier knows that in times of peace the order is not carried out. Nevertheless Private Jensen carried out the order and put a bullet through the hat of the officer, who ignored his challenge one night on guard.

Jensen was promptly arrested, and locked up in a cell at the guard-house. For a few days things looked very grave for him, but the commanding officer made a careful investigation of the case and decided that Jensen was in the right, and had only obeyed orders. Guard duty under the officer in question was a pleasanter task after this incident, and for this the enlisted men of the regiment were thankful to Private Jensen.

During Jensen's three years' term of service as a private of infantry his performances were an unfailing source of amusement to the enlisted men of the regiment, but his superior officers regarded him as a nuisance. It frequently happened that he was chosen as orderly for the commanding officer, because he was the cleanest soldier on guard, but the colonel always shuddered when Jensen reported as orderly, for he knew, by sad experience, that it was dangerous to trust Jensen with any order which called for discretion in execution.

When his term of service was drawing to a close every officer in the regiment called him a fool. At regimental headquarters he was spoken of as a crazy Norwegian. Still, all might have gone well with him, if he had not committed an act which incurred for him the stern displeasure of his own captain.

The captain owned a bull-terrier which had won prizes in bench shows all over the country, and which he valued very highly. One day the captain gave the bull-terrier to Jensen to hold, with orders not to let the dog loose under any circumstances. A stray cur tried to make friends with the

bull-terrier during the absence of the captain, and trouble ensued.

Jensen managed to hold the terrier, but in doing so he was severely bitten, and in order to protect himself he was obliged to choke the animal. He did not wish to strangle the brute, but when the captain returned to relieve him of his charge, he found his dog had been choked to death, and he was not pleased. This unfortunate affair was Jensen's undoing.

"I will not have that man in my company any longer," said the captain to the first sergeant, a few days after this incident.

"He has some good qualities, I admit," continued the captain. "He is sober, clean, honest, and willing, but he lacks common sense. You can tell him, sergeant, that he need not apply for re-enlistment. He is only fit to work on a farm."

Thus it happened that the deed was done, and the word was spoken which blasted all Private Jensen's hopes of winning military glory. The news broke his heart. He first heard it in the railroad train which was carrying the regiment to a little city in a Rocky Mountain territory. It was a rough place in which a strike of miners had been made the excuse for all sorts of violence by its turbulent population.

It seemed that the captain had been as good as his word, and had given Jensen a character on his discharge papers which would effectually prevent his re-enlistment. Of this fact the soldier was duly informed by the first sergeant, as the army regulations require. In a few days his term of service would expire. His discharge papers were already made out, and were locked up in the company field-desk. On his discharge was written in cruel black letters: "This man is so stupid that he is useless as a soldier."

The first sergeant felt sorry for Private Jensen, and told him that he had the right to ask for a board of officers to investigate his record, and pass upon his character; but Jensen thought of the captain's bull-terrier, and the officer at whom he had fired when on guard, and was silent. He had done his best

to be a good soldier, he had been faithful in the performance of every duty, and he could not understand why he was being turned out of the army branded as a fool. As he gazed out of the car window at the flying brown landscape, for the first time in his life tears came to his honest blue eyes.

After the soldiers had been at Jones City for three days, so peaceful was the aspect of the situation that their presence seemed to be unnecessary. There were those, however, who predicted that if the troops were withdrawn riot and bloodshed would follow.

On the last day of his term of service as a soldier in the United States army Jensen was detailed for guard. Since the regiment had arrived at Jones City he had hardly spoken a word to his comrades, but they all knew what troubled him. Every man in Company F knew what the captain had written on his discharge papers, and every man felt sorry for him. The men tried to show their sympathy in many ways, but as they did not succeed in cheering him, they considerably left him alone to brood over his misfortune.

Private Jensen had postponed making any plans for the future until the last minute. He was a member of the third relief, and went on post at three o'clock in the morning. The post to which he was assigned was situated far out of the line of sentries, in a little hollow in the rolling plain, and there was nothing to distract one's thoughts on this post but a little square brick building, which looked like a tiny fort. The special orders for the sentry on this isolated post were not to allow any person to go in or out of this little building.

As there was no one in the vicinity of his post and no one inside of the building, he did not have to exercise great vigilance when he began his lonely guard at three o'clock in the morning.

When the sergeant of the guard had left him, he began to pace up and down in front of the little brick building, and formulate plans for his future career. At twelve o'clock the following day he would discard the uniform he loved so well, for ever, and it was necessary for him to choose another vocation.

The first sergeant had advised him to go to work on a farm, but farming was not congenial to this man of arms. Some of the men in the company had spoken in glowing terms to him of the life of a cowboy, but from what he had seen of cowboys he did not think he should like to be one. The truth was, Jensen was a born soldier, and he did not care to be anything but a soldier. The hours dragged on uneventfully, and he was unable to decide what he would do when he was discharged from the army. He was so sad and so depressed that he did not care what happened to him.

The dawn was breaking, and it was time to expect the sergeant of the guard, whose duty it was to relieve the sentries, and still he was undecided as to his future career. Then the sun came up over the eastern horizon, and he patiently awaited the coming of the sergeant of the guard. Higher rose the sun, but the sergeant did not appear and Jensen wondered what was the matter. Growing anxious, he shouted lustily for the sergeant of the guard, and when he perceived that his shouts were not answered, he was seriously alarmed.

After he had exhausted himself shouting for relief, it dawned on him that he was forgotten on post, but there was nothing that he could do, except wait until some soldier passed, by whom he could send word to the sergeant of the guard or the officer of the day. So he waited while the sun rose higher in the sky and the minutes flew by, but no person appeared at the lonely post. The minutes became hours, and no help or relief came to Private Jensen, who was tied down to his post by inexorable orders. Any other soldier in the regiment would have abandoned his post in the circumstances, but Private Jensen always obeyed orders, and it proved to be a very good thing for Jones City that he did.

Shortly before the noon hour a party of a dozen men came down into the little hollow where he was posted, and expressed their astonishment at finding a soldier there on guard.

"What are you doing here?" inquired the foremost of the party.

"I am on guard," replied the soldier.

When they heard this, the men laughed loud and long.

"You don't mean to say that the army has gone away and left you here to preserve law and order, do you?" sneered one of them.

"I guess it has," answered Jensen, with a smile.

"Well, surely you won't stay here?" said another, and to the astonishment of the miners, Private Jensen replied:

"Yes, I will stay until relieved."

"But they can't relieve you, man! The soldiers went away on a train early this morning!" cried another of the fellows.

But the only thing Private Jensen said was: "That does not make any difference."

"Look here!" cried one of the men in an angry voice. "You fellows quit this fooling! This soldier is crazy. We came here to get the stuff, now let us go in and get it."

Private Jensen had placed himself in front of the door of the little brick structure which he was instructed to guard. The men advanced to enter the building, but they halted abruptly when the soldier levelled his rifle at them, and said:

"I will shoot the first man who tries to enter this building!"

The others knew, by the look in Jensen's eye, that he would keep his word, and they drew back and held a consultation.

Although Jensen did not know it, the little brick building he guarded was the dynamite magazine of the mining company. The instant that the troops left trouble had occurred, and now the evil element which often misrepresents strikers planned to blow up the mines. It was to get dynamite for the purpose that the malicious party had come to the dynamite magazine, but their calculations had been upset by Private Jens Jensen.

After consulting among themselves for a few minutes the crowd went away. One of the party called back to the soldier, derisively: "When you get hungry come to town, and we will feed you." Then the men disappeared, and for a while Jensen was left alone with his thoughts, which were not pleasant.

He did not know that the sergeant of the guard had

suddenly been taken ill, and had forgotten to tell the new sergeant to relieve him. He did not know that he was not missed until the regiment was one hundred miles away, and that when he was reported absent the captain believed that he had deserted, without waiting to receive his discharge papers, which were useless to him. But even if Private Jensen had known all this, it would not have made any difference, he would have been just as faithful to his trust.

Even if he had not expected that his absence would be discovered, and a detail sent back to relieve him, he would have stayed on guard just as he did. The men who expected that he would desert his post because he had been abandoned by his regiment and because he was tired and hungry did not know him. All day this soldier remained at his post without a morsel of food to sustain him, and with only the fetid water in his canteen to drink. At noon his term of service in the United States army expired, but he did not choose to consider it so, as he had not received his discharge.

During the afternoon a rough crowd collected about the dynamite magazine, with the evident intention of forcing an entrance. There were some open advocates of violence. Cries of "Shoot the soldier!" "String him up!" and similar expressions were frequently heard by Private Jensen; but wiser counsels prevailed, and he was not molested. They were not afraid of the man, but they were afraid of his uniform. Behind that uniform was the federal government of the United States.

Efforts were made by the besiegers to accomplish by diplomacy what they did not dare to do by force. Plausible arguments were made to Private Jensen to allow the miners to enter the magazine, and every effort was made to induce him to abandon his post. They refused to give him food or drink when he begged for them, in the hope that hunger and thirst would conquer him if nothing else could; and thus the day wore on and night fell, but still Private Jensen remained on guard, in front of the door of the little brick house.

During the night the roughs posted a cordon of pickets

about the dynamite magazine, and no person was allowed to communicate with the lone soldier on guard there. Many of the strikers would have been glad to feed him, that he might be enabled to save from destruction the mines to which Jones City must look for future employment.

Private Jensen passed the night sitting on the doorstep of the magazine, rifle in hand, watching his watchers. The men on guard were relieved every few hours, but there was no relief for him. When morning came he began to lose hope. He came to the conclusion that he had been reported as a deserter, but even then, after he had abandoned all hope of being relieved, he stayed at his post. Through another long, hot day, although famishing with hunger and tortured with thirst, he remained on guard, and prevented the malicious element from blowing up the mines.

What would have happened to him if there had not been a riot at Jones City that afternoon, it is impossible to tell. Orders were sent by telegraph, which brought the soldiers back to the scene in a hurry. When the troops arrived, one of the first orders issued was to put a strong guard at the dynamite magazine, and a detail of Company F was assigned to this duty. The captain of the company, who had written on Private Jensen's discharge papers: "This man is so stupid that he is useless as a soldier," marched the detail, in person, to the dynamite magazine.

Private Jensen saw the soldiers coming, but he was too weak to rise and greet them. The soldiers also saw Private Jensen, and they marvelled greatly. Some of them shouted to him, in defiance of discipline, and laughed; but the laughter died on the lips of the soldiers when they reached the doorstep and saw the haggard face of the man sitting there. Weak as he was Private Jensen attempted to stand up and salute the captain. He also tried to speak, but no sound came from his swollen lips.

In a voice that was reverential one of the soldiers said: "Captain, Jensen went on guard here three days ago."

The captain thought of what he had written on Jensen's

discharge papers, and he blushed. Then there appeared on the scene a miner who told the captain how Jensen had stood guard over the dynamite magazine for three days and nights ; how the rioters planned to blow up the mines, and how they were foiled by Private Jensen's heroism.

The captain is an impulsive, warm-hearted man, and it is said of him that when he heard the story of the miner he cried like a child.

Tenderly the awed soldiers carried Private Jensen to the field hospital. For several days he was sick and delirious. When he recovered and was himself again there were several surprises in store for him. He was informed that during his sickness he had been re-enlisted. Then an order was shown to him, appointing him colour sergeant of the regiment.

But it was what was written on his discharge papers that most surprised Private Jensen. He found that the captain had written in a bold hand on the face of his discharge : " This man is a hero ! "

IN WILD PLACES.



"BEAR BONNET'S BUCKSKIN, WITH DOUBLED HAUNCHES, PLOUGH
LIKE A HURLED PROJECTILE DOWN THE NEAREST SLOPE."

[See p. 423.]

IN WILD PLACES.



OLD SETTLERS' STORIES.

I.—SUMP'S PLUCK.

BY L. J. BATES.

OVER sixty years ago, in one of the now populous counties of the Northwest, some years before it became a county, and when its white population was less than a dozen families, there lay an elm-log, hacked three-quarters through, which bore the odd name of Sump's Cut. For two decades after the log had rotted away the place where it had been was sometimes called Sump's Pluck.

Neither name nor place is now known. About twenty years ago the two oldest old settlers could not agree within an eighth of a mile as to where Sump's Pluck used to be. Few now remember hearing the story told by the old settlers, and no two quite agree in relating it.

The family of James Pardin Sump, commonly called Pardin Sump, was one of the loneliest outposts of advancing civilisation. Their nearest neighbour lived six miles distant through unbroken forest. Sump was a man of formidable muscle and cheerful temper, whose hardy constitution neither toil nor privation seemed to affect. His wife was also strong. Nevertheless, ague harassed the family.

Few of the present generation know what a malignant, universal scourge old-time ague was. When the forests were

cut away the unaccustomed sunshine sucked up malaria from the moist, newly ploughed earth. There were no wells. The pioneers drank surface water from shallow springs and rills, full of disease spores from ages of decayed and decaying vegetation. Hence *ague* was where *ague* is now unknown.

There were scant knowledge and scantier remedies to combat the disease. Quinine was then unknown; there were no patent medicine cures; all drugs were raw and nauseous. Doctors were miles distant; drug-stores were one to three days' journey away. Most settlers kept "blue mass"—crude calomel mixture—and *picra*. They took pills of blue mass, and then "drenches" of native roots and herbs and home simples, especially boneset tea. The blue mass often loosened the patient's teeth or produced deafness; the roots and herbs were horribly nauseous to the taste.

Sump noticed that as soon as wells were provided deep enough to reach thoroughly filtered water, *ague* ceased. He dug a well twenty feet deep, curbed from top to bottom with split oak-staves, and stoned up as high as the water surface. To accomplish this alone, in addition to his necessary farm work, was a prodigious job. He worked at it several hours each day, morning and evening, before and after his regular day's work.

While he could throw out the dirt with his spade it was easy. But soon he had to rig a windlass with a bark rope, manufactured by himself after the Indian method, and raise the dirt in a slung box. Then Mrs. Sump helped. Sump dug in the well, putting in the curbing as he went down, and his wife at the windlass raised and emptied the dirt. This she did while she was nursing a six-months-old baby, and in spite of the weakness caused by her daily *ague*.

To offset her help at the well Sump did much household work, and nursed her and the sick children as much as his outdoor labour permitted. At least, he let them sleep at night while he toiled late and rose early, and waked in the night whenever aught was needed with a cheerful ruggedness which mocked fatigue and throve without sleep.

Hope and effort were rewarded, When the well was

completed his wife and children began to recover. Their ague came on an hour later each day, until, after some weeks it came only every other day. Fortunately, also, all were not ill on the same day. Susan, aged eight, and Joe, five, had their shakes together in the forenoon of one day, while Mrs. Sump had hers in the afternoon of the following day. Thus she could wait upon the sick children in her well days, and they help her somewhat in their well days.

Sump's clearing was only a few acres in extent. He needed to raise only a little corn, potatoes, a petty bit of wheat, and cultivate a garden patch to feed his family and winter his oxen, cow, calf, pigs, and chickens. In summer his stock found abundance of food in the woods, and he cut wild marsh hay near by.

The woods teemed with game, wild fruits, berries and nuts; the waters were almost alive with fish. Deer, wild turkeys, rabbits, squirrels, partridges, quails, wild pigeons, bears, coons, wolves, foxes, minks and muskrats were superabundant. Sump had constantly to fight them off, to save his crops and stock. Crops he could not sell: there was no population to buy. Furs and hides he traded for clothing, tools, medicines and groceries such as were absolutely necessary. His family were forced to the most poverty-stricken economy, since everything they purchased cost enormous prices.

Sump, looking ahead, enlarged his clearing with busy axe and team. While he was doing this and digging his well, a new settler took land three miles away. This man had some capital. He offered Sump a contract to clear twenty acres for him that year, and have it ready for a crop the next year, when he intended to bring his family.

Sump jumped at the chance. A hundred dollars in cash, part paid in advance, was in itself prosperity! And there was nearly another hundred to be earned by getting out logs, rafters and shingles for the newcomer's log house, log barn and pens! And a neighbour within three miles! The whole Sump family beamed, and Sump worked with redoubled vim and during still longer hours,

He did not get on with his contract as rapidly as he desired—the family ague and the work on the well hindered. He was “slashing” the new clearing—that is, felling the trees in heaps, where they would lie and dry until the next spring, when he would burn them, and later lay the charred *débris* in piles, to be again burned.

One morning he rose long before daybreak, did his chores, built a big fire in the chimney-place with a huge black log, a large fore log and lesser fuel on top, sufficient to last Mrs. Sump all day, cooked breakfast, and wakened his wife.

“Don’t get up, Sally,” he said. “You had better go to sleep again with the children till after sunrise. I only wanted to say that I’ve been thinking since I woke up, and I’ve concluded I sha’n’t be home till late to-night. There’ll be a bright moon, and I can see to chop some hours longer than usual. You’ll have to milk the cow this evening, put the cattle in the barn, and shut up the pigs and chickens. They won’t stray far, I guess. Have Grit [the dog] get ’em home early, before your shake—it’s your ague day, you know. ’Twon’t do to risk ’em out till I get home. We can’t afford chances to any stray bear or wolves to kill a pig or the calf, and there’s lots of bears around this year, and uncommon impudent. And don’t overdo yourself; give your ague a chance to quit. We’ll have a heavy frost pretty soon now, which most always kills ague. Then we’ll be quit of it for good and all, now we’ve got a well. Go easy for a while, Sally.”

“You ought to go easier yourself, Pardin. You can’t work night and day for ever and not break down.”

“Now don’t you worry about me, girl,” said Sump, complacently stretching his muscular limbs. “I’ve never been tired out to a dead standstill yet, like some men, and this job isn’t going to break down Pardin Sump. We’ll have easier times after we get that hundred dollars. So good-bye! I’ve put three buckshot into the shotgun, in case you should need it. I’ll take the rifle myself; maybe I’ll get something.”

He reached the slashing as soon as it was light enough to

chop, and at once went vigorously to work. Tree after tree thundered down before his terrible axe. By nine o'clock he had considerably enlarged the clearing, when he paused to glance with satisfaction over his morning's work and study a huge bent elm, with a peculiar, heavy top, which he was about to assail. He was doubtful if he could make it fall on the heap where he wanted it ; but he would try.

This tree was tough. Sump was two hours chopping it nearly through on one side, to make it fall as desired. At last it trembled at each blow of the axe ; it hesitated, toppled slowly and began to fall. The nearly severed trunk broke at the stump, slipped on the slant cut, and dropped its butt heavily to the ground. The bent top whirled it half-around the wrong way ; it fell upon a smaller tree, the trunk of which bent against another and caught. Sump was disappointed, but thought a few blows on the smaller tree would start the big one again.

At his first blow the caught branch broke ; the huge elm rolled ; the two bent trees, as it slipped down, sprang elastically back, flinging the whirling elm far out toward him. He ran nimbly backward, axe in hand, watching the falling mass. One of his feet caught ; he fell full length over a small, half-sunken log, striking his head violently upon a tree-root. He was half-stunned ; before he could stir, the huge tree thundered down upon him with an earth-quaking shock. Then all was still.

Sump lay face up, with his thighs across the sunken log, the great elm across his thighs. It would seem that such a mass would crush a man flat, as a waggon-wheel would crush an angle-worm. Nevertheless, after some minutes, he stirred. Small twitchings of his eyelids, lips, nostrils ; then convulsive clenchings of his fingers ; then manifest breathing ; finally intelligent effort. Sump used to relate that his first sense was hearing a bird sing. After that he began to see ; a little later he rallied his forces, and aided by his hands, sat up weakly.

He now realised his condition, and examined it with minute

care. So far he was not in much pain. He was conscious merely of a feeling of general numbness and shock, and his strength was gone.

He had supposed his thighs crushed ; but he now saw that the bend of the great elm and its peculiar top had prevented its crashing quite down upon the sunken log. After a little he doubted if his thigh-bones were broken. There was a dead, unfeeling numbness in his legs on the other side, but he thought he could move his toes a little. But a great ache was settling in the crushed flesh, which obstructed experiment, and his head seemed to swell and his heart to labour with impeded circulation. How to get free ? He lay down to think ; but lying down he almost suffocated. He struggled up again, this time painfully.

His axe lay beyond reach, but with his jack-knife he trimmed a long bush with a bit of projecting limb, with which, after much stretching and groaning, he hooked the helve to him. Axe in hand he could do anything ; he was a man again.

From what he could see, he judged that if he could cut the great elm nearly through it would spring up off his thighs. It might turn upon his legs or body ; that must be risked. He immediately began chopping.

It was slow and awful toil. Sitting cramped, with thighs elevated, he could put but little force into his blows even if unhurt, and he was weak. Large chips would not come from the tough elm ; he had to hack small ones. Every blow increased his pain. In a few minutes he gasped, trembled, almost fainted, with a suffocating pressure. But he kept on hacking until blood, gushing from his nostrils, compelled a pause.

The back of his head had been bleeding ever since it struck the root. He leaned aside to let the blood drip on the ground, until it gradually relieved the suffocating pressure. Then he fell to hacking again, although the lessening flow was shaken at each effort in a red spray over his body, so that he was soon a dreadful object.

He had to pause at brief intervals and lean back upon his hands, or forward against the elm, to relieve the pain and fatigue in his cramped loins. The increasing pain in his bruised thighs grew into agony: but that he could not relieve. He thought loss of blood was weakening him; yet it helped him. By-and-by, too faint to strike, he rested a long time, and the bleeding ceased.

Hour after hour passed in alternate chopping and resting. Each hour his blows grew weaker, his pauses longer. But he was succeeding; each feeble hack cut a little deeper into the pinioning tree. At sunset the cut was two-thirds through. The full moon was already high; light dimmed but did not darken; it shone full upon his work. But in the forest shades it was night. Wolves howled here and there; foxes barked, wildcats screamed, none very near.

At about nine o'clock, in one of his intervals of rest, a bear entered the slashing and stood upon a fallen tree, turning its sniffing nose this way and that. Doubtless it scented blood. When Sump sat up and resumed chopping it disappeared, but soon it showed again in another place. Sump was not much disturbed; he knew all about bears.

After two or three intervals, however, the animal approached and stood only a few yards distant. It seemed to suspect that the man was in distress and might become an easy prey. It did not move away when he worked, but growled angrily. Sump paused and collected his waning energies. The cautious brute advanced a step or two, hesitated, came on, halted, and stood almost over him.

When, in a moment, it stooped to strike him with an armed paw, and then grapple, Sump swung his axe in so sudden and stark a blow that it cut the intercepted paw half off and caught the beast just under one ear, with a weight and force that sunk the keen blade deep through fur, muscle and skull.

This desperate effort toppled the man over, wrenching his tired loins and swollen thighs so that he lay many minutes almost unconscious. But the bear had enough. It scrambled

away, moaning, and lay down near by under a pile of tree-tops.

Recovering once more, Sump hacked and rested another hour—two hours—with astounding endurance. He was now almost spent. His blows only cut petty splinters. Suddenly the great trunk stirred. With renewed hope he struck the straining wood three or four more blows, when the vast weight lifted a foot high off his thighs. He dropped his axe, pulled himself free with his hands, and lay gasping.

He could not use his legs, or even feel them, or turn upon his breast to crawl away. So he lay quiet for another hour, while the effort of his heart, arteries, veins and nerves to restore circulation and life sickened him, so that the wood seemed to reel about him and the solid ground to roll in waves. This was succeeded by agonising pains. But the inertia gradually wore off.

He sat up and dragged himself with his hands, drawing his axe, and so reached the stump where he had left his rifle and his coat wrapped about his lunch. This he got, and ate heartily for a man so hurt. Then he hacked splinters from a dry log and kindled a fire, beside which he lay armed and safe, planning how to get home.

Mrs. Sump's ague was breaking fast. She had only a light chill and little fever that day. She put the children in bed early, and, feeling unusually sleepy, soon sank into a long, refreshing slumber. She awoke with a curious hallucination that her husband was calling. She thought he had already got breakfast, and was surprised when she found he was not in the house. Then she remembered that he was not to come home until late, and looked at their old wooden clock by the glow from the hearth. It was just three in the morning; the moon had set, and the night was dark. Grit barked at her from outside.

She was now alarmed. Something must have happened. She imagined Pardin lying helpless in the woods, perhaps dead. With true pioneer spirit, she prepared to go in search of him. Rapidly dressing and snatching a cold breakfast,

she lighted the dim tallow-dip lantern, went to the barn and yoked the oxen to a light stone-boat—a flat sledge of two broad planks, slightly bent up at the forward end. Upon this she tied a big bundle of marsh hay, and started for the slashing.

There was no road, but Kelley, their six-mile-distant neighbour, had made a rude track by clearing away occasional logs and brush enough to allow a team to worry through. Along this lonely way she urged the plodding cattle, walking at their heads with her feeble light, undismayed by any of the dismal night voices of the forest.

Daylight was dawning when she found her husband lying in the warmth of his slowly burning log. Utter exhaustion had overcome pain, and he was asleep—a blessed medicine to prepare him for the torture of being dragged home in such a jarring conveyance. He insisted upon his bear being first secured. Mrs. Sump looked for it cautiously, carrying the rifle cocked. She found it dead, and loaded it first upon the stone-boat, despite the protests of the blowing oxen. With this and the hay Sump rode home in groaning triumph.

In five weeks Sump was slashing again. But his walk was lame and slow all the rest of his life. The first doctor who came into the county said there were adhesions of muscles to each other and bones, and of sinews to sheaths. He offered to break up the adhesions at a cost of only six weeks' torture, but Sump prudently refused. Stiff as he was, only a champion wrestler could put him on his back, and the stoutest bully would fare ill in a quarrel with him. He succeeded in executing his contract only a month late, Mrs. Sump helping a good deal.

The middle part of the great elm was not burned, but lay for years, exhibiting Sump's cut, indisputable evidence of the quality of pioneer hardihood.

II.—THE TRAIL OF THE RUNAWAY FLOCK.

BY CHARLES TENNEY JACKSON.

AT an "Old Settlers' Picnic" in western Nebraska I heard the following story from one of the hale pioneers, as we sat in the shade of a white-topped prairie waggon :

I came out to the North Platte country in the early seventies, where my sister had been some months teaching the first school established in the country. It was in a one-room sod house about a mile west of the "town" across the trackless prairie, the location being a central one for the greater number of pupils, as the settlers then lived mostly along the river bottoms and the sloughs.

Things were booming when I came, green from the East ; the season had been remarkable for the beautiful golden autumn weather, which lasted far into December, so that the week before Christmas there was no snow whatever. This surprised me, as I had heard so much of the fierce blizzards and "northers" on the North Platte. I used to call at the little schoolhouse every afternoon, and walk home with my sister across the prairie, gazing at the gorgeous sunsets that seemed to fill the world with radiance ; there was not even a tree to break the circled line of the far horizon.

Just before Christmas came a cold spell, and after that the prairie lay black and lonely ; the pools and courses of the shifting river among the sands were ice-locked, and the few sheepmen who had been induced by the open weather to leave their flocks on the range were now driving them to the bottoms and the south hills in expectation of a storm that would cut us off from the world. But every one was cheerful. The stores were bright with holiday goods and crowded with farmers and their wives ; grain was coming in at the elevators ; the overland trains were regular, and the expected storm did not cause alarm.

I had promised to obtain some greens for a Christmas celebration at my sister's sod schoolhouse, and one afternoon

I drove out with a waggon and mule team toward the river. Now in that country of sage-bush and buffalo-grass Christmas greens were scarce, and although I crossed many gullies and wandered several hours, the best I could get was some sumac berries, some grey, feathery grass and a few enormous "tumble-weeds," which might be decorated with ribbons.

All the afternoon there was a curious depressing silence in the air; unbroken clouds hung like a pall of grey from horizon to horizon, and distant noises came with a peculiar distinctness, although there was not the slightest breath of wind. As I drove homeward, I noticed that the cattle and horses, which usually were scattered widely over the range, nibbling at the frosty stubble, had gathered round the south sides of the straw sheds and corrals, and that many coveys of prairie-chickens were winging to the river thickets. The weather had become very much colder, and still the temperature fell.

When I drove up to the house where my sister and I boarded, on the western outskirt of the village, our host came out into the yard.

"While you're hitched up," he said, "you'd better drive on to the schoolhouse, and get the schoolma'am and all the children that are coming this way. There's going to be a blizzard."

"It won't come before four o'clock," I replied. "I'll go up then."

"You drive right on now, young fellow," he said, with a glance at the leaden sky. "Tell her to dismiss the school and hustle for town. Can't take no chances with this weather."

Being a tenderfoot, I replied, "All right." But his precautions seemed foolish, for the little sod schoolhouse was in full view of us, and could be reached in less than fifteen minutes easily.

As I trotted the mules over the prairie, I suddenly noticed that the air high above me seemed filled with flying, swirling snow. Then the brown horizon and a distant settler's sod house, with the smoke curling cheerily above it, were suddenly

blotted out by a white, impenetrable curtain. It came swiftly trailing nearer, hiding everything from sight; then, like a blast from a gigantic funnel, a gale struck me, the like of which I had never dreamed of before. It was a torrent of icy air, tugging and shrieking at the very ground beneath my feet; a hurricane of piercing sleet that went howling past and set me gasping for breath, and still yelled on at the same frightful speed.

Before I could prevent it, my big mules were turning toward home, but I urged them back with shouts and line, and bowed my head over the dashboard to escape the stinging ice particles. They went slowly on with eyes closed and shoulders braced against the wind for a few hundred feet, and then they doggedly insisted on turning round, in spite of the whip. I went to their heads, but the strong brutes backed and circled, blowing the sleet from their nostrils, utterly rebelling. I ran back to the waggon and from the seat fairly pulled their jaws around to their flanks as they sheered off from the storm. Then one of them deliberately lay down with his tail to the blizzard, and both became entangled in the harness, and when I succeeded in unhitching the standing mule, he jerked away and lumberingly galloped off in the blinding snow.

As the remaining mule was kicking unmanageably in the deepening drift, and as I was very cold and becoming exhausted, I gave up the attempt to free the brute, and started back to the village for aid. But when I had made twenty steps back from the waggon, the full meaning of the storm broke on me. I stood in the midst of a white wall, seeing nothing, hearing nothing but the roar of the ice hurricane, which was so complete and steady that it gave me a sense of absolute loneliness, as a vast silence does.

So hard did the fine hail beat and bruise me that I turned my back to its force and tried to reason out the way to the house, which could not have been forty rods from where the waggon stood. I turned due east, judging from the track of the storm, and plunged swiftly along with the gale until I

stopped in a panic at being wholly lost on the trackless prairie. Now the wind, rising every minute, lashed me furiously from all directions ; my sense of distance and place was hopelessly confused in the whirling chaos of snow.

To stand still would be soon to freeze, and after a scared calculation of my bearings, I went on in what I thought the direction of the village, although the inclination to go with the storm was almost irresistible. It was not until after what seemed an hour of futile struggle that I halted again, turned once more to peer into the coming blizzard, and was amazed to see the dim, low outline of some vast thing strangely moving toward me, as if a wide, slow, grey blanket were creeping over the ground out of the storm. It was not until the front was almost on me that I made out a flock of sheep.

The grizzled leader walked almost to my feet and there stopped for several seconds, fixing his snow-crested black eyes upon me in mild surprise. Then he forged ahead with the storm. Behind him in solid mass moved an immense flock, nothing visible to me except their snow-covered backs and the moving legs and downcast heads of the ones on the edges of the gap that opened as they neared me and closed as they passed me by, often touching my clothes.

There seemed to be thousands of the sheep as they filed past in the driving gale. I could not imagine where they were going, but every one of the solemn-faced creatures seemed to have a fixed purpose. Just as the end of the flock seemed nigh, a big black dog loomed up in the rear and came straight at me, with a trifle of suspicion in his eyes. He took my joyful greeting in friendly manner, however, but I looked in vain for any rancher accompanying the flock. I tried to detain the dog, thinking that surely he had some human companion not far away, but after regarding me doubtfully for a minute, he trotted after the sheep and disappeared in the storm.

It struck me that the faithful guardian must be taking the flock home, and so I ran hastily after him with the blizzard at my back. As I knew nothing then about Western stock,

I did not understand that the sheep were only drifting aimlessly with their tails to the storm. These silly creatures will wander before a storm as long as they can stand, unless the leader finds a bush or a gully where he can take refuge. Then he stops, and the whole flock pack round him to leeward and lie down to die.

The sheep travelled rapidly through the rising drifts, and the black shepherd and I followed. I supposed then that he was leading them toward the ranch, but now I knew that he had been caught alone with the herd, and, being powerless to check their flight, had refused, with high dumb heroism, to desert his charges.

Some of the younger and weaker of the sheep were already lagging in the rear, despite the dog's efforts to keep them together. I tried for a time to assist his noble endeavours, but the stragglers were too many and feeble. It was infinitely pathetic to see how his deep, troubled eyes appealed to me, and the gallant struggles he made to save all of the wearied flock. He would charge swiftly back in the cruel storm to seek out some weakling, and then, after a little time, would come sorrowfully on, dumbly feeling that he had done his best, although vainly, and that his duty was with the main body.

Still the sheep hurried on in the deepening snow, and their path made it easier for me. We crossed several gullies, and then the course led directly down one until I found myself stumbling over the hummocks of sand at the bottom of the Platte River bottoms among the scraggly willows that marked the scanty watercourses in its bed.

There my faith in animal intelligence began to waver, and I bitterly concluded that neither the sheep nor the dog knew any more than I did of our whereabouts or destination. Being chilled through by the cutting wind, wet from the icy needles that penetrated my clothes and melted, I was in a discouraged stupor, and wanted nothing so much as to lie down and sleep.

The dog was exhibiting signs of alarm. He struggled round

the flank of the halting flock with whines of eagerness, and finally disappeared. I fancied that I once heard his bark above the roar of the blizzard, but I did not attempt to learn what was the matter. I was too exhausted and desperate to know or care.

But the sheep, after struggling to crowd forward, and slipping to right and left, stopped and began to lie down and seek to get under one another in the snow. Except for the tumult of the storm and the shrill patter of the ice on the low willows, there was no further sound. As I staggered toward the sheep, I thought that, as I must lie down, I should seek the shelter of their bodies. So I crawled over the backs of a dozen of the wearied animals and then kicked and pushed my way down between the heavy, ill-smelling fleeces. The animals made way for me and then crowded round me so closely that I had to force my face out to keep from smothering. The darkening night was closing down, the blizzard swept above, and the sleet sifted unceasingly between the warm, wet sides of my protectors.

An overpowering desire to sleep was upon me, but I struggled against it, feeling that danger lurked in all this soothing comfort. But the heavy warmth of the sheep and their quietness so affected me that I soon drifted into slumber. At troubled periods I awoke to find darkness all about, but the breathing of my fleecy companions again and again renewed my drowsy sense of security and comfort till oblivion came once more. It was only when the cramped position of my body made a change necessary that I awoke enough to see that there was a dim light shining through the snow above me.

I broke through the chilly covering to find it broad daylight; the sun, high in the cloudless sky, was glaring intolerably on the wide, white country. The sheep were still quiet under their snow blanket, and the surface was unbroken, but beyond them I saw the black water of the open river smoking against its glittering banks. The blind march had led us out on a narrow, sandy peninsula, where the river curved around in

its narrow bed, and here, it seemed, the faithful dog had divined danger and had slipped around the flock in time to keep the leaders from venturing on the treacherous ice.

Where the brave fellow was I did not know until I climbed the low bank and discovered him watchfully upright on the highest point, gazing off across the drifts to the town, which was, to my amazement, hardly a mile away. He welcomed me with delight and saw me plunge into the snow toward the settlement with barks of pleasure and encouragement, but did not offer to follow the broken path. I felt so happy at the termination of the adventure that I soon covered the distance, hungry and weak though I was. Then I found that the children and my sister had stayed all night in the school-house, and had suffered but little discomfort.

My runaway mule was discovered in the shelter of a crib in the town; his mate was frozen to death as he lay by the waggon.

The rancher who owned the sheep was out early, looking them up, and although nearly one-half of them had perished on the marsh, or died before they could be dug out, he was glad enough to find any of them alive.

As for the gallant dog, I tried in vain to buy him of the owner; he would not consider any price. But for many years I used to make frequent trips to the ranch for the sole purpose of a visit to the brave and sagacious "Blink."

III.--AUNT SALLY DISCO.

BY L. J. BATES.

JOHN CALTHORPE YELLO was one of the earliest settlers of the Northwest Territory. He was a square-built and strong-willed young man, twenty-six years old, when he bought a tract of government land and began a clearing in the unpeopled forest. His nearest neighbours were the family of Samuel Disco, eight miles distant. There were only six families in what is now a big county.

After three years of lonely toil, John Yello had cleared and partially fenced a farm of twenty-one acres, with a rudely furnished log house and a log barn. As he owned a yoke of oxen, a sow and a litter of pigs, a cow and a calf, fowls, waggon, plough, harrow, a few necessary tools, and barn and cellar well stored with crops, he began to consider himself successful. And he became engaged to marry Miss Sarah Disco; a comely young woman twenty years old.

One Sunday in September, having cooked and eaten his breakfast, done his bachelor housework, milked his cow and turned out his stock to graze in the woods, Yello was watching the vigorous antics of the promising calf, meanwhile whittling with his jack-knife a small hickory key-pin for one of the bows of an ox-yoke. Suddenly he heard a peculiar, half-coughing howl from the woods. He listened a moment, but the cry was not repeated.

"Wonder whether that was a wolf or one of those blamed Injun dogs," he said to himself. "Anyhow, it doesn't sound natural."

He resumed whittling. Presently an animal—wolf or Indian dog—ran silently past him and seized the frolicking calf by one of its legs. The calf bawled. John sprang to the rescue, but the cow was quicker; she bellowed and charged, caught the creature on her horns, and hurled it against John with such violence that he was upset. As they scrambled up, the wolf or dog caught Yello's left hand and lacerated it to the bones.

The man kicked the beast furiously and it fled into the woods, repeating its unnatural, strangled howl. His own dog, which had been breakfasting off a venison bone by the house, rushed up, but Yello forbade pursuit, not having his rifle ready and wanting the dog for another service.

Yello went to the house, bathed the wounded hand and bound it with a rag, laying a bit of old buckskin, greased with venison tallow, upon the hurt. Then, having arrayed himself in a clean "hickory shirt"—made of coarse, hard, bluish cotton—and coat, he started to walk through the woods to Disco's, to spend Sunday with Sally.

As this was the regular Sunday programme, Grip did not complain at being left alone in charge of the stock and place, although he sighed, dog-fashion, as he saw his master put on his hat and stride into the woods, rifle on shoulder.

Of course, as John did his own housework, his "hickory shirt" was not starched, but it was as clean as home-made soft-soap could wash it; and, set off by a neck-scarf of red silk, a much more fastidious lady than Sally Disco could not but acknowledge that he was a manly and gallant-looking lover.

Sally had come out into the woods to meet him. She at once noted his bandaged hand, and made anxious inquiries.

John told her about the singular attack. Arriving at the house she told the family, and all hands—father, mother, three boys, of eighteen and fifteen and thirteen, and two girls eleven and seven—cross-examined John minutely.

"You think it was an Injun dog?" queried Disco.

"It looked more a wolf than a dog. Who ever heard of an Injun dog with spunk enough to come all alone into a white man's clearing and tackle a calf and then bite a man? Why, an Injun dog would have just yelled with scare when I ran at him."

"Then it was a wolf?"

"I didn't say 'twas a wolf. Would a wolf come into a barn-yard in broad daylight, with a man standing there? A wolf's hair is sleek and shiny this time of year, and that crittter's was rough and dull, with bits of dirt sticking to it."

"Bristled up like an angry dog, eh?"

"No; just rough, as if each hair was on end and dried out."

"Then you conclude 'twasn't a wolf and 'twas a dog?"

"What's the use of cornering a fellow? I don't conclude anything; only whichever 'twas, it's given me a lame hand, when I've got no end of work to do."

John went into the house to help Sally and Mrs. Disco cook an extra good dinner, to which he was able to contribute a brace of plump partridges that he had shot while coming over.

Disco looked after him, shaking his head uneasily. "I don't like this a mite. But don't one of you children say another

word to John about it. If that dog or wolf was p'isoned, or had distemper, it might make a serious hurt for John. If 'twas a mad dog—no ! no ! I didn't mean to speak that ! *That* couldn't possibly be. Not since America was discovered has anybody heard of *that* in the woods—at least, not more than half a dozen, all uncertain. There's no such in all this territory, and never has been. Be sure none of you speak of it. Mind, now ! I wouldn't put such a fool idea into John's head for any account—or Sally's. But it's the strangest thing ! ”

Before dinner, as was a Sunday custom in many pioneer families before there were churches and schools, Disco read a chapter in the Bible to the assembled family, prayed, and all sang a hymn ; then each of the children recited Testament verses and were questioned thereon. After dinner there was an hour of lessons in reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, geography and history, conducted by Sally, as the oldest and best educated.

During these lessons Disco took John outside and communicated important news. There was a settlement of eleven families at the mouth of the river, thirty-six miles distant, besides as many more scattered about within a radius of six or eight miles. The first week in November an itinerant missionary was to visit the settlement and organise its first church, the place already having a commodious log school-house. This preacher held a license from the Territorial government to perform marriages. In those days itinerant preachers obtained much of their livelihood from celebrating marriages and funerals, for which they generally received some sort of fee. Often funeral ceremonies were held weeks or months after the burial.

“Waubish, the old Indian, is going to the settlement with two canoes some time this week, to trade his furs. He can take a letter, telling the preacher to come here in a canoe we'll send for him, and marry you and Sally. This'll give you all winter to get settled down in your housekeeping, so's you'll be ready to tackle next season's work like steady old folks. When Sally comes out from her lessons you take her out for a stroll around

the clearing and talk it over. Mother and I are agreed ; if you and Sally agree,—which I don't doubt she will, being a sensible girl,—we'll begin right off to fix for a wedding."

Sally did agree. She returned crowned with a spray of wild flowers, which John had tied about her head, and she was so radiant that old Disco remarked :

"Say, mother, don't you think she's almost too handsome for us to give away?"

"John's unusually good-looking, too, to-day," replied the observant matron.

The two succeeding Sundays were happy ones for the lovers. They had the delights of talking over their plans for the future—how they would furnish and keep house and farm, and how they would prepare for the wedding.

John toiled from daylight until dark with eager zeal. He already had eight acres of winter-wheat sown, and he was harvesting potatoes, corn, a small patch of buckwheat and all sorts of late vegetables. After dark he laboured by the light of his hearthfire, making, with his few tools, new furniture for the house. He accumulated a great pile of shagbark hickory wood for his bride to burn, pared and sliced pumpkins to dry on poles hung about the fire, hewed slabs to make floors, rechinked and replastered the house-walls tight against winter cold, and filled barn and bin, root-cellar and garret, with good things.

He meant that Sally should have the most convenient housework outfit in all the Northwest Territory, and the best variety of provisions. He had already gathered and dried all sorts of wild fruits and berries in their seasons, and there were nuts and grapes still to gather after the early frosts. Bee-trees to be cut in October, would furnish honey. He would have everything for her comfort.

Two Sundays passed after the adventure with the dog, or wolf, and Wednesday came. John's hand had healed, and only the scar showed pale. On Wednesday evening the calf refused to eat. On Thursday morning its coat looked staring. When offered breakfast it thrust its nose deep into the pail, but seemed unable to swallow. Then it seemed to go crazy, butting furiously

at everything in reach of its bark rope. It almost knocked John down with its baby-bud horns, and charged so fiercely against a stump that the skin on its pate was torn. At times it shivered.

While John was looking and wondering, he was called upon by Harkis Deppel, who wanted to buy a pair of pigs. They talked pigs and calf alternately.

"Somewhere I've seen just such a calf case," said Deppel. "Can't just recollect where and when 'twas, either. It hasn't got at anything p'ison to eat, nor been snake-bit?"

"No."

"H'm! It's mighty cur'ous. Where did I see a calf like that? I know I did somewhere. Well, say the leetlest boar pig and that runt of a sow pig; couldn't you go a dollar less? I've been more'n a year getting the money together to buy a pair of pigs—it's pinching work."

Pigs were hard cash then in the newest settlements. Barter would buy almost anything else, but even bank-bills wouldn't buy a pig. Bank-bills were uncertain. They ran from eighty cents on the dollar to par, being "wildcat" and "red-dog." A bill might be good to-day and worthless to-morrow. It was safer to swap products than to sell for currency.

After a long palaver John sold the pigs for eighteen Spanish milled silver dollars and two beaver-skins.

How do you suppose Deppel took those pigs home through thirteen miles of thick woods, without a road, or even a trail? He had a neck-yoke of light wood, carved to fit upon his shoulders and behind his neck. From each end depended a rawhide thong down to his hands. He wrapped each pig in a broad band of buckskin, with holes through which its legs were thrust, and hung one at each thong of the neck-yoke. Carrying this burden, he walked all the way home, making a streak of squeal and grunt the whole distance. Besides, he carried his rifle, without which the squealing pigs would not be safe in the woods.

Just as he started, having got pig off his mind, Deppel stopped and said, "It's come to my mind, now. I recollect it plain as

a picture. 'Twas way back in Pennsylvania, when I was a boy. Pete Disselbaugh had some of his stock bit by a mad dog. I saw the calf after it was took. It had every one of them symptoms, same as yours has, to a hair. If 'twasn't dead impossible, I'd be willing to swear what ails your calf is hydrophoby!"

What John felt at this sudden, unexpected pronounciation of an awful doom can only be conjectured. What he did could only be guessed at after subsequent investigation. Deppel testified to the last he saw of John, when he looked back over his shoulder from an opening in the wood :

"He stood there just as I'd left him ; hadn't stirred a wink, as I could see. I'd no notion of anything serious with John, more'n I had of being scalped 'fore I got home, else I'd gone right back and stayed with him."

Either that day or the next John killed the calf and buried it deeply behind the barn. He had stopped work and cleaned and put in order everything about the house. Then he copied the legal phraseology from an old deed of gift, kept as a memento of a dead sister, and carefully wrote a deed of gift of farm, lands, house, barn, crops, chattels, and everything he possessed to Miss Sarah Disco. Apparently he doubted the validity of this document, for he also wrote a will, bequeathing all he owned to Miss Sarah Disco.

On Sunday at the usual morning hour, John approached the Disco place. Sally, as usual, met him. She noticed as he approached that he looked haggard and very grave. She put up her face to be kissed, but he took no heed, beginning at once to explain his business affairs. He said he wished her to understand everything exactly as it was : also he stated the best way to make the farm increase in value.

She listened intelligently, although she would have preferred, like any girl, that he should discourse of their happiness. Meanwhile she noticed that he occasionally talked through shut teeth ; that his voice seemed changed ; that his hand, which she held, was hot ; that he shivered now and then ; that the scar on his hand looked red, as if again inflaming.

He would not enter the house ; said that he must go at once to Harry Billings's on business. She walked a little way with him. When parting, she again put up her face, and again he did not notice.

"Why, John," she said, reproachfully, "you didn't kiss me when you came ! Are you going without a kiss ?"

He caught her in his arms a moment and—pushed her gently away ! "No, no ; I daren't !"

Turning, he abruptly strode away, and did not once look back. She went into the house, half-angry, half-frightened, wholly puzzled, and shut herself in her room, merely saying to her mother that John had gone to Billings's on business, and would, no doubt, call on his way home.

"There comes John Yello from Disco's !" cried Billings to his wife. "I wonder what's up ? Come right in, John. Why, you aren't looking well !"

"Look as if you'd had a siege of sickness, John," said Mrs. Billings. "Fever'n ague ?"

"No, ma'am. I want you two to witness these papers. I'll tell you what they are, so you can swear to them. This one is a deed of gift of my farm and all my property to Sally. This one is my will of the same to Sally."

They signed, with many expressions of surprise.

"A young man in love," said Billings, "is usually some off in business ; but this is away off ; it's singular. You're sure you mean it ?"

"I do mean it. I want you both to notice that I'm in my right senses and clear-minded. For why ? I *am* sick ; it's incurable, and these papers are to make Sally safe while I can."

He cut short their conjectures and questionings. Rolling up the papers and a letter to Sally in the buckskin, he asked Billings to take the roll to Disco's and give it into Sally's own hands. "I couldn't bear to see her again myself," he explained. "It's the last kindness you can do for me."

"I don't like this," said Billings, aside to his wife, "but a sick man must be humoured."

Billings supposed that the Discos knew all about the matter, as John had just come from there ; otherwise he would have been more reluctant to go.

This whole business had not occupied more than twenty minutes. As soon as Billings was gone John suddenly said good-bye to Mrs. Billings, walked rapidly across the clearing and disappeared in the forest.

Sally received Billings with surprise, which turned to a chill of consternation when he handed her the package, saying :

" It's John's deed of gift to you, and his will. Almira and I witnessed 'em for him. He would have it that I should bring 'em to you right off. I suppose you know what his sickness is ; something uncommon, isn't it ? "

Unanswering, she unrolled the package, and glanced at the will and deed just enough to note what they were. Then she opened and read the letter. A thrilling cry of anguish brought all the family about her. She put the letter in her father's hands. He read it aloud, thus :

DEAR SALLY : This is to say good-bye. An awful sickness has got me. To-morrow I shall go crazy mad, and try to kill anything that comes nigh me. Next day I shall be dead and a fearful thing to look at. It's incurable. The best doctor on earth couldn't save me. So I am going away to die where I can't harm any one, and where I hope I will never be found.

All I owned is yours now, and I should like you to give something that was mine to each of the family. Give my dog, rifle, horn, moulds and pouch to Joe. Grip is a good dog and Joe will be a good master to him. Give Sam my fish-spear and lines ; give Dan my jack-knife and the small gimlet ; give Ella my Testament and looking-glass ; give Nelly my cat and six chickens—she likes pets.

I love you too true to be selfish now, so I say for you to cut sorrow short ; forget me as soon as you anyway can—that will be the best. And I hope you will live a long, good life, happy in loving and being loved, as a good woman ought.

JOHN CALTHORPE YELLO.

While they stood dazed, Sally asked Billings :

" You left John at your house ? "

" Yes. "

She ran out of the door, across the clearing, into the woods, along the trail to Billings's. Joe immediately followed her at full speed.

Finding John gone, Sally and Joe hurried back home. Pausing only long enough to put on a bonnet and shawl, Sally started with Joe for the Yello place, totally deaf to remonstrance and advice. Only she first asked Disco how much silver money he had. "Thirteen dollars." She had two dollars, Joe three, Sam and Dan half a dollar each, the girls a dollar. "That's twenty," she said.

Two miles out she bade Joe leave her and run on to the Indian village and tell Waubish. "The Indians can track John if anybody can. Tell Waubish we'll give twenty silver dollars to the men who find him; twenty more as soon as we can get it if they bring him to me alive. You go with Waubish, but stop and tell me when you pass John's. I shall stay there all night, watching. Bring him there."

"I'm afraid to let you go and stay alone. John may go home stark mad——"

"John will not harm me; and I shall not be alone."

"Why, Sally! who'll be there to take care of you?"

"God—and my love for John."

Sally was enthusiastically welcomed by Grip. Sundays were Grip's lonely days. He had long ago learned to recognise Sally as his legitimate mistress, and perhaps he supposed that where she was John must be near. Mayhap—who knows?—he understood that his master had abandoned him. Certainly John had not been his usual cheerful, friendly self for the past day or two, and had departed strangely stern and sad.

She found the house in complete order. Every article mentioned in John's letter as a legacy had been gathered there, each duly labelled. On a small chimney-corner shelf was a buckskin pouch containing twenty-two silver dollars and three or four bank-notes, marked "For Sally." The new furniture and conveniences all attested John's loving care for her.

About the middle of the afternoon the Indians passed, and Joe stopped to report. The Indians were loath to go. They

were superstitious against meddling with one crazed, and they knew rabies, although no one of their tribe had ever seen a case. But twenty silver dollars were a great inducement, and three expert trackers armed themselves and accompanied Waubish.

They struck John's trail six or eight miles from Billings's, and followed it all the afternoon, and most of the night with torches. John had travelled rapidly and with the craft of a woodsman, making tracking slow. Here and there his traces were cunningly hidden ; sometimes they abruptly broke off, to be refound in a different direction.

Nine miles out, and afterward at decreasing intervals, broken bushes, trampled mazes and fragments of clothing showed where he had been seized with the fearful paroxysms of hydrophobia. But always with returning reason, in his unconquerable purpose, he resumed his swift flight, with baffling uncertainty, yet toward some part of a wide region of almost impenetrable swamps and thickets. Before morning the track was lost altogether. The Indians made wide circles about its apparent end, and searched every square yard within their traverse, vainly.

Joe left them and returned to Sally. Two of Waubish's men kept up the search more than a week. All the rest of the season, and for several seasons, Indian hunters kept a keen lookout for a possible find. Twenty silver dollars was to them an enormous reward. But no further trace of the lost pioneer was ever seen by human eyes.

Somewhere in the forest a desperate man fought for his life with the most dreaded ill that assails mortal blood, at times transformed into a malignant fiend, in his sane moments crushed by hopeless woe. Or possibly, let us hope, kindly nature so whelmed all his thoughts in his strenuous determination to escape pursuit that he imagined himself struggling ever nearer to some blessed haven of relief and rest.

All that fall children and some older people avoided wandering in the woods. Timid fancy pictured an unrestrained maniac lurking in the shadowy recesses ; but gradually these gruesome

imaginings faded away, and the forest resumed its sylvan charms with the blooms and greens of another year. The grim story was judiciously hushed in kindness to those whose memories were sore.

Sally fulfilled part of her lover's farewell wishes. She lived "a long, good life," but without "loving and being loved," except in the general sense of being a popular favourite. She permitted no suitor to approach even the hem of her faithful affection. But the kindest, most sympathetic and energetically helpful, the most lonely of pioneer women, was widely known as Aunt Sally Disco of Yello Farm.

IV.—A SLY HOG-THIEF.

BY WILLIAM A. BOWEN.

IN the early days of American settlement in Texas it was a standing joke to ask a new-comer, "What did you do back in the States to make you come to Texas?" But to ask, "What was your name before you came to Texas?" was considered an outrageous attempt to meddle with strictly personal affairs.

Yet a kind of freemasonry among early settlers involved a tacit though unexpressed demand that each man should let almost every detail of his life, and even his purposes in his new home, be known to his neighbours. Reticence in these matters was resented and regarded with dark suspicion. Thus the silence and reserve of Mr. and Mrs. Bayless and their son, Jim, brought them into trouble.

The Baylesses came from Florida to Texas three years before the occurrences that I have to relate, and settled on the Sabine River. They still had interests in Florida, and exchanged products *viâ* steamship to Galveston. After a year people complained that the Baylesses were "great stick-at-homes and say-nothings," although if this were questioned, as it frequently was by the Buckleys, it was admitted that Mr. and Mrs. Bayless were often visitors at the neighbouring

farms, and seemed to have a general knowledge of everything that concerned their neighbours—beasts, growing crops, farms, gardens and politics.

But—and this was the grievance—they could never be brought to discuss their home life, or to tell what interests they had outside of the good-sized farm they cultivated, or to declare anything regarding the character of the products which they shipped by the little boat that so frequently landed at their pier.

Old Tom Gafford was the leading spirit in expressing the suspicion of the Baylesses. He was, next to Joe Buckley, the oldest settler in that section, and his words carried weight. To remarks that Mrs. Bayless was the first to visit the sick and the readiest to make new-comers feel that they were among friends, or that Mr. Bayless seemed to find out and relieve misfortune before any one else heard of it—to all such evidence old Tom Gafford simply answered, with an air of intense shrewdness :

“Yes ; and can’t all of that be done to throw dust in our faces ? Them Baylesses are sharp folks, an’ they know how to win folks over while the hawgs and calves of their betters is disappearin’.”

Of late a number of hogs and one or two calves belonging to Tom Gafford had disappeared, and he really believed that the Baylesses could tell what had become of them. No one disputed his dark hints except the Buckleys and Gafford’s daughter, Amy.

Not long after this, when three more hogs were missed, Joe Buckley overheard a neighbour repeating Gafford’s opinion that the Baylesses had made away with them.

“Tom Gafford’s a fool to talk that way on no evidence but his suspicions !” put in Buckley. “My goodness, man ! You’ve got only two feet, yet manage to get over considerable country ! A hog’s got four legs, and ranges over more territory than any other stock.”

“Yes ; but some folks that’s been there say that the Baylesses’ smoke-house is always full of meat, especially hams

and shoulders, and they kill hardly any hawks ; leastwise not many," retorted Dan Moran. . " And Bayless and his Jim and them two niggers of their'n is always a-haulin' something down to the landin', and 'most every boat brings a lot of boxes and barrels and bales and what-not for them. They haven't such an all-fired big farm, either ! "

This angered Joe Buckley. " Moran," he said, " what the Baylesses get by boat and what they send away are none of my business, or yours, either ! You know them to be kind, Christian neighbours. Who's so ready to nurse the sick as Mrs. Bayless ? Wasn't it Mr. Bayless that got the Methodist circuit-rider to give us a regular Sunday appointment, and didn't he give the lumber to build the meetin'-house and help put it up ? There's not a family in fifteen miles where the Baylesses haven't been regular angels when there's been sickness or need or sorrow or death. "

The silence that followed was broken by Tom Gafford's voice : " And wouldn't a sharp man do all them things for a blind ? "

" Oh, bosh ! " said Buckley ; but old Tom repeated the catalogue of his losses, and remarked that only hogs and calves running down his lower pasture, near the Baylesses' road to the river, were ever missing. He concluded : " I'm going to get up a committee to make search of the Baylesses' premises, and give them a hint that back in Florida will be a healthier place for them. " And in this project he quickly succeeded.

Three days later the committee went to Mr. Bayless, headed by Tom Gafford. Bayless had been warned by Joe Buckley. To Gafford's attempt to explain their errand Bayless said, with evident pain, but dignity in his voice and manner :

" I know your purpose, gentlemen. Do your will with as few words as possible. "

He led the way through the house, kitchen, smoke-house, and down to the warehouse. As the searchers found nothing except evidence that Bayless was a man who turned into value what his neighbours wasted, they quietly started off.

But Bayless asked them to wait a few moments and hear something he wished to tell them.

"If I were given to making innuendoes, I might," he said, "express hope that the thief, when caught, will not turn out to be a man who has been actively circulating slanders against me." At this Gafford started and turned red.

"But I suspect no one," Bayless went on, "and yet I have lost more calves and hogs than any of you."

The expressions of surprise were interrupted by Tom Gafford :

"Mighty funny you never said nothin' 'bout losin' hawgs before now !"

Bayless looked at the man for a moment as if he would strike him to the earth, but controlled his anger and spoke quietly :

"Now I have nothing further to state or explain. Good-day to you."

The committee went away, feeling somewhat vexed at his curtness. Still, none of them really agreed with old Tom Gafford's assertion, "He's simply a sly thief, that's my opinion ! Look at the coffee and sugar and molasses and oranges and lemons and dry-goods and stuff he's got in that warehouse ! Enough for a store, almost. Them things was bought with stolen hawgs and calves."

At that time the long drought had dried up many lakes and pools, the river was lower than ever before, and stock was compelled to go many miles to "Spring Lake" for water.

Three days after the committee had searched the Baylesses' premises two fine calves were missing ; two nights later a sow and nine pigs and two large shoats disappeared. The calves belonged to Buckley, the sow and pigs to Gafford and the shoats to Moran.

"Now I reckon you air convinced !" Gafford exclaimed to Buckley.

"I'm convinced that I've lost two very promising calves," said Buckley, staunch to his valued neighbour.

There was renewed excitement. Two independent secret

councils were held. Gafford and part of his committee—some of them had become neutral—arranged a system of night patrols. The Baylesses and Buckleys arranged a like guard. Mrs. Bayless so far lost her patience as to express a conviction that Gafford knew something of the mystery, and was trying to throw suspicion on others to conceal his own guilt. But Jim Bayless said :

“No, mother, I think you’re mistaken. I believe the old man is honest in what he does. He is ignorant, he has had a hard time, and he is naturally suspicious of any one whose entire business is not known to him. Such losses never occurred before our coming ; they all occur in that part of his pasture farthest from his house and from the river, and near our road to the landing. We must help catch the thief.”

So the Baylesses and Buckleys agreed that they would patrol the lower pasture, especially around Spring Lake.

This lake had evidently once been the old channel of the river, which now wound on its course two or three miles from its old bed. From the lake one could easily trace the old course by the slough extending in both directions to the river. Only the highest water now poured over the natural levee and into the lake. But such freshets were frequent enough in the early days to keep the lake well cleared of drift and obstructions.

The lake derived its name from several bold springs that gushed from under the bluffs at its north side. These springs were sufficient to overcome evaporation and keep the water at almost the same level all the time ; and they wash into it enough alluvial soil, sand and clay, to prevent its being clear, the water being so muddy that the eye cannot penetrate it to a depth of more than a few inches.

The borders of the lower shores were, in former days, thick with a tangled growth of ironwood, hackberry, haw, and button-willow, matted and tied together in a woven mesh of rattan. It was this extensive cover that enabled the real robber to escape detection so long.

A few nights after the two patrols began—each unknown to the other—Jim was startled by the quick “whof! whof!

whof!" of frightened hogs, and then he heard a distant splashing in the water. A few seconds later a number of hogs rushed past where he sat under the trees, tore through the vines and went up the hill. Jim thought he saw some one moving in the shadows at the upper edge of the lake, and crept round to reconnoitre. But he saw no one, nor did he hear a sound except the deep bass of a bullfrog singing his "mo-o-m! mo-o-m! mo-o-m!"

Dan Moran, who was on watch for the Gafford party, reported the same occurrence, and said he thought he saw Jim Bayless in a patch of moonlight; but he was not sure that it was Jim.

Nearly a week went by and there were no more losses. Gafford's friends were losing their ardour in the chase; they called it trapping moonshine. Two or three of them slept at the Gafford house, but they let the old man stand watch alone. This increased his resolve to keep continuous watch, and he asked his daughter, Amy, to relieve him about an hour before day. Mrs. Gafford was almost an invalid, and Amy was the only child.

She did not share her father's suspicion of the Baylesses, but she was as anxious as he that the robber should be found. So when her father came in just before day and quietly awakened her, telling her not to "make a noise and wake these lazy fellows in the shed-room," she quickly rose, dressed, and taking her gun, went down the path toward the lake. She was simply to fire the gun in case she saw anything suspicious.

Now it chanced that Jim's watch was the latter part of this same night. Tired of walking, he had sat down at the southwestern part of the lake.

The snapping of jaws, stamping of feet and grunting of hogs roused him from a half-doze. He knew this meant that a bunch of hogs were huddling together in the presence of a danger not sudden enough to start them to running.

Through the haze of the bluish-grey mist that curled upward from the lake Jim saw a dozen or more hogs standing together on a sand-bank that formed a small peninsula jutting into the water. He parted the vines to get a better view. Suddenly

he rose and grasped his gun in readiness for use. He saw some one moving along the shore, and carrying something, probably an axe—a blow on a hog's head with an axe would prevent any squealing or struggling. Jim felt sure this was the thief.

He could see the hogs huddled just beyond what seemed to be a log, that lay with its small end in the edge of the water, the other along the sand-bank, across half of its narrow neck. The thief approached slowly and Jim grew excited. He believed he was about to catch the rascal "red-handed."

The next moment he wondered if his eyes were playing him false, or if he was losing his senses. He thought the log moved! There! Yes, it began to curve; then Jim heard a great flapping. The next moment the small end of that log swept through the air, hit the supposed thief, and sent the form sprawling to the water's edge.

The next instant a piercing scream rang out on the morning air, nearly deadening every nerve in Jim as he realised that the thief was a woman, and that what he had taken for a log was a monster alligator.

Jim bounded straight toward the brute that had Amy Gafford at his mercy. The boy had recognised her almost as soon as he had seen her danger.

Another slap of that tail would send her into the water, perhaps into the brute's jaws.

Jim saw that he could save her only by getting between her and the alligator, by taking her place directly in the circle of that awful stroke. The great, black, scaly body had thrown itself almost entirely across the peninsula, and was creeping toward the girl.

As the tail began to rise and curve away from Amy for a sweeping stroke, the huge jaw opened in anticipation of its victim. Then Jim called: "Step back and lie down, Amy, quick! I'll save you!"

The tones were imperative and she obeyed instantly. Jim sprang straight over the great reptile, and the next instant he was floundering in the water, swept in by that powerful tail,

The alligator seemed astonished for a moment, then dashed in after his new victim.

Amy jumped to her feet and began screaming for help, uttering Jim's name. Help was already near, for her father had been coming to call her when he heard her screaming Jim's name.

"Jim Bayless!" the old man shouted back at the house almost jubilantly. "Come on, everybody, quick! Amy's caught them Baylesses!"

Reaching the neck of land, he was surprised to see his daughter standing at the water's edge and pointing into the lake. As he looked, straining his eyes to see what might be there, Amy cried:

"Right in there! Quick! Quick! That's his blood—and for me, for me! Oh, save him, save him!"

Old Tom Gafford's first thought was that Amy's fright had unbalanced her mind. But when she said, "His blood—for me!" he saw by the fast-coming light that the water had a crimson hue. Then he heard a commotion at one side of the sand-bank, then the head and arms of a man rose above the surface, followed by the open jaws of an alligator snapping at his already torn and bleeding victim.

Gafford took in the situation at a glance, threw down his gun, grasped his bowie-knife, and was about to plunge in to the rescue. But at that instant Jim's right arm shot out, and went straight under that uplifted jaw and between those rows of rake-like teeth. With a mighty snap the upper jaw came down, but it did not quite close on the arm, which was immediately withdrawn. Blood spurted from the great mouth, and with a deep bellow and a mighty lashing of the water, the monster sank from sight.

Only for a moment did horror paralyse Tom Gafford. Then he plunged in, reached Jim with two mighty strokes, and grasped him just as he ceased to struggle toward the shore and began to sink.

When Jim opened his eyes again he was in the Gafford house, Amy was pouring cold water on his arm and foot, his

mother had her soothing hand on his hot forehead, and he heard his father and Tom Gafford in friendly converse by the door.

They told him what had happened—nearly two weeks before. Also they told him that they had got the neighbours together and used pigs and calves as decoys until they had killed eleven alligators—one with a double-bladed hunting-knife sticking in the upper and lower jaw.

“It’s more than ten years since any ’gators has been in that lake, and I never once dreamed of such a thing,” explained old man Gafford.

Then Jim Bayless told how he had learned from the Seminoles in Florida to disable an alligator by thrusting a double-pointed instrument into the brute’s mouth. He had managed to open both blades of his large knife and had used it successfully, but not until his left foot and arm had been badly torn.

From that time forth old Tom Gafford declared the Baylesses to be the kindest and best people in Texas, and that was long before he knew that Jim Bayless was to become his son-in-law.

V.—THROUGH THREE FEET OF SNOW.

BY WILLIAM R. LIGHTON.

ONE who lives in the peace and quiet of long-settled parts of the country must find it hard to understand the motives that prompt the pioneer to leave peace and quiet behind him and to go into an untamed wilderness of forest or prairie. Too often we think of the frontiersman as but a wild-hearted adventurer, who is moved by a half-savage love of excitement rather than by clear reason and a constant purpose to perform certain hard tasks. The true pioneer must be more than a wanderer : he must be a worker. His courage must be equal to more than his rare and exciting adventures : it must be equal to the endurance of the countless fretting annoyances of his daily life.

The pioneering of Nebraska was begun in the summer of

1854, when the Territory was formed and the lands were thrown open to settlement. Some of those who took part in the work are still alive, hale and hearty. They have been my chosen companions for a long time, and they have taught me many things. Let me tell you one of their true tales of the early days—tales that wholly reformed my first mistaken notions of pioneer life.

In 1859 the Nebraska prairies were but thinly settled. Most of those who had crossed the Missouri River with the purpose of making this land their home were gathered in the towns along the eastern border of the Territory, or were settled upon the rich lands near by; only the more daring had pushed on to the prairies west of the river valley, where they thought they saw larger opportunities and a more perfect freedom.

Richard Warren came to Nebraska from Ohio in the early summer of 1859, bringing with him his wife and child, a boy of seven years. He had three horses, a strong waggon, and a little food and furniture.

At Nebraska City, where he crossed the Missouri, he bought those implements needed for his first year's work in breaking the prairie soil. He had been a farmer all his life; he was not afraid of labour. From Nebraska City he went on into what we call the "Platte country," one of the richest and most beautiful of all our prairie regions. A day's journey west of the town of Columbus he chose the site for his home, and set bravely to work.

As he had nothing at hand of which to build, except what was furnished by the prairie, he did what the other settlers had done—he made a dugout. He dug a hole three or four feet in depth, as if for the beginning of a cellar; then from the banks of the Platte he hauled willow saplings, whose butts he planted round the edges of his hole, the tops being bent over and joined together, forming a dome-like roof; then upon the willows he piled earth, covering the earth with a layer of firm sod; and when he had made a doorway and a fireplace his house was done.

Externally it was only a low, round mound ; but it was snug and warm within, and it sufficed. When he had provided a sod stable for his horses, his farm-buildings were complete for that year.

October had then come, and while fair weather continued he gave his time to breaking the sod upon a few acres of his claim, that the soil might be ready for corn-planting in the spring.

Through the summer there had been nothing occur to cause him the least discomfort or uneasiness. Various bands of Indians had visited his claim occasionally, but when they found that he showed no fear and that he dealt justly with them, they bore themselves as his friends. He had money enough to supply the winter's needs, and the future was bright.

In Nebraska no season is so treacherous as the early winter. Sometimes we pass Christmas-tide with almost no ice or snow, yet in the next year the sternest rigours of storm and cold may be upon us in November, and endure unbroken until spring. The terror of the open prairies is the blizzard, which in its greatest severity is unknown in the East. It comes upon us with the suddenness of a hurricane at sea.

In one hour the air will be the balmy breath of the south ; in the next, without apparent cause, a gale from the north will begin ; the mercury will fall as if the bulb had been broken from the thermometer ; the sky will be almost instantly overcast by a leaden grey mist, and then will come the blizzard, more dreadful and fateful than the tornado. No protection of clothing seems to avail to save one who is caught abroad.

The cold is intense, and the wind will sweep wildly along with the speed of an express-train, whirling before it a mass of fine snow whose crystals cut like glass where they strike.

The traveller cannot see where he is going ; for even if it were not for the blinding snow, the bitter wind renders his eyes useless. Even to breathe the polar air is torture.

Only the inexperienced try to make way against the blizzard,

and in a few moments they find themselves benumbed to the heart and quite helpless. Even the beasts of the plain and range know that their only hope is to drift before the storm until it abates. It may continue for a few hours, or it may be uninterrupted for two or three days, and for those poor creatures that can find no shelter, its touch is the touch of death. If it were not for the blizzard this story would not be told.

Warren knew that he must make a trip to the town, about twenty-five miles away, to buy the winter's food ; but thinking that it could be done when the weather had grown too bad for his plough, he put the journey off from day to day until December was near at hand and the ground was frozen hard. Then, when he was getting ready for his trip, his wife was seized with a severe illness, and for a week he was at her bedside as nurse.

When she was at least much better, he worked late into the night preparing for his journey. The supply of food was nearly exhausted ; the flour was quite gone, and there was almost nothing in the house which the invalid could eat.

Although his anxiety for his wife was great, there was nothing to be done but to leave her and the boy alone together while he went upon his errand. He meant to start very early in the morning, hoping to reach the town and make his purchases before nightfall, and to return home in the night.

But about midnight he heard a sweeping gust of wind roar in the chimney, and then another, and within a few minutes the roar was unbroken. He rose and opened the door to look out, and the harsh wind chilled him through and through in a moment. It was a sharp struggle to get the door closed again in the face of the strong blast. Dressing hurriedly, he went outside to make sure of what was happening. When he had gone to bed an hour before, the stars had been shining brilliantly, but now there was no star to be seen—only a dull black sky above and the formless black prairie below.

The stable lay a few yards away from the house to the south,

and as he made his way to it, the north wind upon his back forced him to run. The horses were whinnying and stamping uneasily, as if their instincts warned them of trouble. Warren closed the stable door, lighted a lantern that hung upon the wall, and busied himself in putting the harness upon the two horses he meant to drive to town, for he thought he had better start at once.

But when he opened the door again to return to the house the flame of his lantern went out, and he was thrown violently to the ground. The wind had greatly increased in strength, and his face was stung by tiny flying particles of ice. He was half-stunned by the force of his fall, and lay in the doorway for a moment before he could rise. Then he used all his strength to pull the door shut behind him, and tried to run to the house ; but the riotous night seemed to be making sport of him, for instead of running he could only stagger stiffly, bending his head and shoulders low and bracing his feet upon the earth to keep himself upright.

Warren struggled so for several minutes, unable to see where he was going, but thinking he was making his way straight to the house, until at last he turned his back to the wind and stopped to look about him. He could see neither the house nor the stable—nothing but the unbroken level of the prairie that was now whitened with snow. The air was so clouded that his eyes did not serve him beyond the range of a few yards.

He shouted with all his strength ; but even while he did so he knew that he could not be heard through the tumult of the storm. Although he could never have been far from the house, he wandered round and round for many minutes until at last, by the merest accident, his feet stumbled upon the rising dome of his roof. He was so thoroughly chilled and exhausted that he must very soon have given up the struggle and lain down upon the ground to be covered by the drifting snow. When he got into the house an hour passed before the benumbing chill left him.

In deep anxiety he and his wife waited for morning, and

heard the storm increasing. The evening before Warren had brought into the house a plentiful supply of fire-wood, and there was enough more piled outside to last for four or five days. The wood would outlast the food.

The blizzard blew until darkness came at the end of the second day. When Warren opened the door he found his house almost buried in a drift, and in the doorway a solid wall of snow rising to the top. With much labour he forced a way out until he could stand with his head and shoulders free. Nothing was to be seen but an unbroken expanse of snow, and as he floundered about he found that around the house it lay more than waist-deep.

A weight of fear settled upon him. The sun had set an hour before, but he could see that the clouds were broken, although they were still drifting wildly with the wind. His only hope lay in the probability that there would be no further fall of snow. When he returned to the house he cooked a little of the food for his wife ; then he endeavoured to sleep that he might be strong for the ordeal of the morrow.

He could not guess how long it would take him to reach help, and his wife was far too weak to be left alone. So when the cold, clear morning came, he prepared to take her and the boy with him upon horseback through the snow. They might all perish of cold upon the prairies, but he thought that such a death would be quicker and easier than death by starvation.

His nearest neighbour's house was fourteen miles away, and to it he meant to go. Upon the back of one of his horses he placed his wife and boy, wrapping them about with all the blankets and bedclothing he could find ; then he got upon his own horse and set off, leading the other by the bridle.

He was not an experienced plainsman, and he found the struggle even harder than he had feared. At first he tried to pick his way across the higher spots, where the snow had somewhat blown away ; but the wind was still strong and pitilessly cold, he was forced to keep in the lower, more sheltered places where the snow was deep. This course was

painfully slow, and it was also dangerous, for it made their path zigzag, and might lead them far to one side of the place they wished to reach.

The horse Warren rode was soon so fatigued that it could not go on. A horse is not at all skilful in breaking a way for itself in deep snow. Warren was forced to do what plainsmen and soldiers have often found necessary—to dismount, abandon his own horse, and go ahead on foot, breaking a trail in which the led horse could follow.

For the second time he was in some way guided aright. When night came he had reached a spot upon the river that he knew, and this told him that he had come eleven miles on his way, and that he had but three miles farther to go. Then, while he was trying to travel upon the ice in the river, where the course was freer, and where he thought they could make greater speed, the horse slipped and fell, breaking its knee.

As Mrs. Warren could not walk, her husband had to lift her upon his back and carry her, while the boy struggled along in the rear. Soon, however, the little fellow's strength was quite gone. It was impossible for Warren to carry both; and to leave the boy where he was, without protection, would have meant speedy death.

Warren searched until he found a nook upon the river-bank where the snow lay deep, and in the snow he dug a cave with his hands large enough to hold the boy comfortably. Spreading a blanket upon the bottom of the cave, he laid the boy on it and covered him warmly; then he hung up his overcoat so as to keep the wind from entering the chamber. Dividing what remained of their food, he placed half of it beside the boy, and told him to stay within the shelter until help came; then again he took his wife upon his back and resumed his weary march.

It was not until four o'clock in the morning that he staggered to the door of his neighbour's house and found shelter and relief. His wife was benumbed almost to insensibility, nor was his own plight much better. Almost two hours passed before he could speak, and he shook with a palsy of utter

fatigue. But as soon as he could eat and drink the warm nourishment that was prepared for him he rallied bravely, and insisted upon leading the way back to the place where his child had been left. Before noon the party returned, bringing the boy with them, safe and sound. Then, the terrible experience being over, Warren collapsed completely, and was unable to rise out of bed for a month.

Was the pioneer discouraged? Not at all. When the winter was past those dauntless spirits returned to their home upon the lonely prairie, where they lived for many years afterward, until the boy and other children who came to the household were grown into sturdy men and women, who have lived such lives as cast no discredit upon the example of their father and mother.

VI.—AN INDIAN'S GRATITUDE.

BY FRANKLIN WELLES CALKINS.

My friend, Carl Van Eps, was, in his younger days, a rider for the pony express. He rode between Big Springs and O'Fallon's stations, on the Platte River. It was dangerous ground, the common hunting-ground of the Sioux, Cheyennes, Pawnees, Arapahoes, and several other hostile tribes.

One afternoon in the late fall his trail was obliterated by the tramping and the dust of north-moving herds of bison. He passed several hunting parties of Indians in the distance, but they were not strong enough, or were too busy with their hunting, to attack, and Carl escaped the usual perilous chase to be expected whenever Indians were encountered.

The messenger was making his way by his sense of direction through befogging dust clouds, when his pony shied at a limp and battered Indian, attempting to get to his feet in front of it. This wounded hunter was a young Sioux, with a broken shoulder and other injuries got in a recent mishap of the chase.

For a moment the express rider hesitated. His duty to his

company and the knowledge that the injured man's tribesmen would, sooner or later, return to look for him, were balanced against the possibility of his death or further injury under the hoofs of the trampling herds.

But seeing that the wounded hunter could not rise to his feet, Carl's decision was quickly made, and the deadly enemy was picked up and given—much to his astonishment, doubtless—a seat behind the messenger's saddle.

Carl was but a few minutes behind his scheduled time at O'Fallon's, where the Indian was grumblingly taken in and fed and cared for until he recovered. Little was learned from the taciturn Sioux, except that his Dakota name was, translated, Bear Bonnet.

Some months later, long after the hunter had returned to his people, Carl was swinging forward toward O'Fallon's, when an Indian rider appeared coming out of a bluff coulée to meet him on the pony trail.

The messenger eyed the Indian's advance with suspicion, and hitched a pistol holster forward. Then as the red man drew near, with a sign of friendliness, Carl recognised Bear Bonnet.

"How-how?" shouted the messenger, motioning the Sioux to wheel and ride alongside. But Bear Bonnet halted and waved his arms up and down with an emphatic motion, signifying in the sign language, "Halt there! Trouble ahead!"

The messenger drew rein, and there passed a rapid colloquy, mostly in the sign manual, between the riders. Carl learned that his situation was one of extreme peril. Bands of Sioux, coming on to cross the river, were stretched out for a mile or two parallel with his trail, and some of them were just beyond the river bluffs. Already he was half surrounded upon his left, and the river, full in the spring flood, was roaring upon his right.

Bear Bonnet urged him to turn at once to the river, not to attempt crossing but to sink saddle and blankets and then to go into hiding upon one of the willow-fringed islands not far from shore.

The Indian said he would swim the messenger's pony across

the river himself, and would return the animal to its owner when the danger had passed.

"Heap Ogalallas," said Bear Bonnet. "Come so—come so—come so! Ho, cola, git!"

Carl, scanning the bluffs, now noted a faint veil of dust above the high lands in front. His danger was imminent, but his duty to his company and to the mail service was above the consideration of personal safety. He must as heretofore, "ride it out" at all hazards.

The young messenger felt grateful to the Sioux for having ridden ahead of his fellows to warn him of danger. But to Bear Bonnet's urgent counsel he shook his head in smiling negative, and slipping to the ground, tightened his saddle cinches. The Indian followed suit. Then, to Carl's surprise, the Sioux, mounted upon a swift pony, rode at his side and between himself and the bluffs.

Soon there were other Sioux to engage Carl's attention. The swarm coming toward the river were Ogalallas, fierce fighters, and the most implacable hostiles. The messenger rode swiftly, but at first held his horse in careful reserve, noting with shrewd eyes, as he scanned the bluffs, the approach of trailing dust clouds. In the speed, cleverness and endurance of his trained racer lay all his hope to reach O'Fallon's with the mail-bags.

Some minutes before the first big party of Sioux rode into the valley the express rider saw that he had the race of his life before him. Presently, as dust overhung the near bluffs in front of him, he let his pony go at top speed. Yet he was hardly abreast of the swarm of wild riders whom the bluff coulées emptied in long, ant-like files upon the river-flats.

The Indians seemed not to notice him at first; they must have thought that two of their own riders were scurrying along before them. Carl now noted that Bear Bonnet was no longer riding with him neck and neck. The Sioux had dropped a hundred yards or so to the rear.

The messenger gave his pony an approving slap upon its neck. If Bear Bonnet's buckskin, with the legs of a coyote, couldn't

keep the pace, he thought, his own more heavily weighted animal must be superior to the Indian stock.

He made the most of the precious moment when the Ogalallas seemed to be considering his identity. Then the Indians recognised him as a white rider, probably fleeing from the courageous Dakota in his rear, and with tremendous enthusiasm—judging by the noise they made—launched their ponies in pursuit.

The washout cañons of Pony Creek were six miles away. He knew the intricate windings of those cañon-cuts, and if he could reach them far enough in advance, there was some chance to dodge his pursuers there. He leaned well forward, and his "Spanish ticklers" sought his pony's flanks.

The response was running which resembled the skimming rush of a frightened antelope. Across two miles of space, in that clear atmosphere, he heard the whoops of the Sioux. A procession of sage-bushes flitted by as if blown by the wind. Presently the flying rider looked behind to see what had become of Bear Bonnet. With some surprise he noted that his first and casual judgment of the Indian's clean-limbed buckskin had been, after all, correct. Bear Bonnet was not losing ground, but to what end was the Indian thus giving chase?

Apparently the young Sioux had thought it necessary, for his own safety, perhaps, to change his tactics, to seem to be taking a very earnest part in the chase. The express rider could easily conceive that it might become necessary for Bear Bonnet to show a hostile hand in downright earnest. Very well, let him take care of himself, if need be, but not come too near! Carl took a revolver from his holster and twirled the cylinder to see that its six percussion-caps were in their places.

In the meantime the string of low-lying riders was stretched for half a mile upon the messenger's left. There were more than a hundred in pursuit, according to the messenger's judgment, and a large squad of the foremost were certainly riding ponies as fleet as his own.

Ahead of him, three miles away, the bluffs met the river; a

mile beyond their rise lay the washouts of Pony Creek ; and still a mile and a half beyond the creek his trail descended to the stage station in the valley of the Platte.

Carl's pony had already made a sharp gallop of six miles when the Sioux had appeared ; and the animal was, moreover, weighted with mailbags and a heavier saddle than the Indians used. Despite this handicap, the messenger swept across the flat valley to the foot of the abridging bluffs, keeping nearly even pace with the Sioux.

But their lines were surely converging upon his trail, and a score of their swiftest riders were now scurrying up the hill slope but a quarter-mile or so upon his left. If it were not for the fact that the pony express trail bore to the right, at the level of the high lands, Carl would now have turned to the river for the slender chance of escape by swimming across.

His horse had made a splendid run, but was plainly giving out. Carl cast a backward glance. Bear Bonnet was within fifty paces and was easily holding the pace. The messenger's only hope now was that he might reach the Pony Creek cañons in time to gain a cover from which he might stand off the Indians until help should possibly arrive—a hope slender enough, at best.

At the level of the bluff the foremost Sioux were swiftly bearing in upon his trail. Under his legs Carl could feel the sharp heaving of his pony's flanks. The animal was streaming wet, and panting like a wolf run to earth. Carl only wondered that the gallant bay had not dropped in that terrible straining up the bluff.

Again the express rider looked behind him. Bear Bonnet was now in close chase, not more than thirty paces away. Even as Carl looked, the young Sioux unstrung his bow and fitted an arrow to the string ! Wonderingly, the messenger swung the muzzle of his pistol to rear. But his quick eyes noted the arrow of his pursuer ; it passed to his right at so wide an angle that he gave an involuntary hoot of derision. The Indians upon his left noted the shot, and yelled encouragement to their fellow.

Again, as Carl was about to fire upon him, Bear Bonnet let fly an arrow, and it passed, like the former, far upon the messenger's right. Instantly the flying horseman divined that those bow shafts were launched with no hostile purpose. Bear Bonnet wanted him to turn to the right—to ride to the mouth of Pony Creek!

There, the express rider knew, were an old buffalo ford and a trail which came in at the mouth of the main cañon and so passed by easy stages along the river bluff toward the stage station. This route was at least as near as the pony trail, but the ditch-like cañon was so steep that its descent would test the courage of any rider less than reckless.

Little difference need the danger make to him at that moment! He turned his flagging horse toward the mouth of Pony Creek. And now he leaned forward and spurred the animal to a last desperate burst of speed, a final heroic effort to gain fighting cover.

The crowd of Sioux, now fast gaining upon his exhausted mount, yelled their triumph, which shrilled upon his ears and set all his nerves a-tingle. Would they follow him over the precipitous earth-banks of the cañon? Ardentely he hoped so. At least some of their necks might be broken along with his own.

He now lay flat upon his pony's back and neck, and the trained animal, understanding the necessity, strained every muscle in a last rare spurt of running. Carl did not again look behind until his reeling beast was hurled headlong into the vast ditch of Pony Creek.

Bruised and dizzy, the fallen rider picked himself up, to see his gallant pony lying, heels up and stone-dead, in the bottom of a dry run. The mail-bags had been torn from their saddle fastenings and lay at the edge of the ditch.

In the same instant he saw Bear Bonnet's buckskin, with doubled haunches, plough like a hurled projectile down the nearest slope; saw, with his brain in a whirling maze, the young Sioux leap from his saddle, thrust a lead rope at him, and then swing his loosened mail-bags upon the steaming

pony's back. At touch of the mail-sacks Carl recovered presence of mind, remembering suddenly his peril and the necessity for action. In an incredibly brief space of time he was mounted and off again.

As he fled down the cañon, the express rider looked back to see Bear Bonnet break his bow and fling himself face downward upon the bank of a ditch, where he lay as if stunned by a fall from his horse. Cunning and loyal young Sioux—he had paid a debt of gratitude at a fearful risk to himself!

The messenger's new mount jumped ditches and washout holes in perilous and quick succession. And now a series of astonished screeches broke out above his head and to the rear, and the bullets and arrows of his pursuers knocked up spurts of dust upon the embankments as he flitted by them. Nor did the Ogalallas fail in daring. They thundered over the steeps and into the cañon in a yelling rout.

But in a twinkling Carl had dodged behind a projecting spur and turned his scudding mount upon the old buffalo trail. With each touch of the spur the express rider felt a growing confidence, and in a minute or two of running he knew that he had under him a pony as fresh and swift as that of any wild rider in the chase.

In point of fact, the Indians did not chase him much beyond Pony Creek. In five minutes or less after leaving the cañon—and much ahead of his scheduled minute—he drew rein at O'Fallon's.

When his story was told to the boss of the station and his men, they said that something handsome should be done to reward that "Sam Patch of a Sioux." They held his pony at the station, hoping that Bear Bonnet would himself come for it, if his tribesmen did not kill him. Then, as the buckskin disappeared from the company's herd one night and no others were taken, they knew that the brave young Sioux was alive, but would not come to claim a reward.

TRAPPED.

AN ADVENTURE AT COON ROCK.

BY FRANKLIN WELLES CALKINS.

COON ROCK, a bluff fronting the Wisconsin valley, near my old home in Iowa County, is almost mountainous in height, and is crowned with a semicircular ledge of rock rising from fifty to seventy feet, and honeycombed with holes which have been dug into its crevices by wild animals.

This huge mass of rock, despite its solid appearance, is seamed and cracked in every direction, as if terribly shaken in some ancient convulsion of the earth. For the most part these seams and crevices are filled with earth and loose rock. As many of them extend far back into the face of the ledge, coons, wolves, and other animals have been able to make secure dens therein, beyond the reach or sound of human foes.

In my time the rock was a famous resort for coons, and the woods below often resounded, of a moonlight night, with the baying of dogs and the shouts of hunters.

There was great fun and excitement, but no danger, in hunting coons in the regular way; but three boys who lived in our neighbourhood, and who were inveterate coon-hunters, once pursued their game into the "big hole" of Coon Rock, and met with an adventure full of peril as well as excitement.

The big hole is an irregular cave at the lower right-hand end of the ledge. Its black mouth can be seen miles away. Leading from this big aperture is a black hole into which a man can easily crawl for many rods, and which leads into a roomy, triangular chamber.

In the early days of the settlement this hidden lair was inhabited by wolves, which were a great pest and nuisance to the first comers ; but when both county and state placed a bounty upon the scalps of wolves and foxes, men began a determined effort to rid this region of them.

Hunters of our neighbourhood soon so harassed the inhabitants of the big hole by lying in wait for them that the animals were either killed off entirely or abandoned the den, and for a long time no wolf was known to stay about Coon Rock. If any wolves were there, they were wary enough to go far away to do their mischief.

In my time the big hole was supposed to be the resort of coons only, although wolves were still seen, and often did damage in the valley and among the bluffs.

Few persons, however, cared to explore the inner recesses of the cave, and up to the time when the Ferris boys and Sim Jones crawled in, we knew of the size and character of the big hole only through reports of two or three hardy hunters who had gone to the end of it some years before.

The two Ferris boys, "Gib" and Dale, and Sim Jones lived on farms at the Mill Creek Bottoms, only a mile or so from the rock. They kept a half-dozen dogs of various sorts and sizes, and usually hunted in company.

If there were coons prowling in the woods, they would find them ; if there were bee-trees within the radius of a half-dozen miles, their marks upon the trunks might almost certainly be expected. In short, they were hardy, keen-eyed, backwoods boys of the early pioneer days.

In October, a day after Gib had shot a coon at the mouth of the cave at Coon Rock, these three determined to explore the big hole. The shooting of a coon at the mouth of it satisfied them that there was a family of the animals within.

In their younger days the boys had never been able to muster the courage to crawl into this dark den, but lately they had talked much of the venture. Now they prepared themselves with tallow candles, a shotgun, which Gib carried, and stout clubs for knocking the coons on the head.

They took their dogs with them, and after entering the main aperture, tried to force the animals ahead into the black passage. Every dog of the pack refused to go. Each, when urged, shrank back with anxious whines and drooping tail, but as none of the dogs were particularly courageous, their conduct did not dishearten the coon-hunters.

The boys each lit a candle, and Gib went ahead with his gun. For some seconds they were able to advance by stooping; then they were compelled to go upon all fours. They crawled cautiously over a narrow bed of packed earth and smoothly worn stones.

A stuffy animal odour, like that emitted from a close dog-kennel, assailed their nostrils. Presently Gib's candle, which he was holding too close to his mouth, flickered out. He halted and relighted it with a match.

"Don't smell like coons in here!" he muttered, and the hollow murmur of his voice sent thrills along the spines of Dale and Sim.

"Better not go any farther," suggested Sim, while the dogs in the rear whined and sniffed suspiciously.

"Shucks!" said Gib. "There isn't anything bigger than foxes, or perhaps wildcats, and who's afraid of them?"

Holding the candle with greater care and trailing the shotgun at his elbow, he pushed ahead again.

Sim's candle "breathed out," but he followed in the light of the others until Gib called a halt.

"There's a big rock jammed down in front," he announced, "and just room enough to crawl under. Wish we could get the dogs to go ahead, but we can't. I'll go in, though, and see if I can get through, and then call back for you to follow." His courage was diminishing; he felt that he would not be able to muster enough for a very long journey in that black pocket.

Holding the candle carefully and pushing his gun ahead, he wriggled under the rock. He had not gone more than his length, advancing an inch at a time, when the space suddenly widened in front of him. Crawling from under the big boulder,

he was able to rise to his feet, and found himself standing in a roomy cavern of irregular and, in the dim light of his candle, uncertain shape. He could make out rough walls of rock on either hand at the distance of a few feet, and a slanting roof just above his head; but in front of him all the lines of wall and roof merged into shapeless black.

The cave was, in fact, much as he had heard an old trapper, Bob McLeod, describe it to his father years before.

There were no animals in sight, and no suspicious sound came to his ears; but he wanted to make further explorations in company with the boys and the dogs, and so, bending down, he shouted back into the hole for them to come on.

His voice came to the ears of Dale and Sim as if through a speaking-trumpet. In a few seconds the group of youngsters stood together wondering in the cavern, which could now be better seen, for the candles of Gib and Dale lighted the space ahead for some twenty-five or thirty feet. The dogs gathered about the boys' legs with curious sniffs and nervous whinings. They were evidently anxious and frightened.

"Now," said Gib, "if there are coons or wildcats in here we want them, and we're going to have them, too. Sim, your candle's out; take mine, and take the gun, too, while I roll a rock into that hole we came through."

There were plenty of loose stones and small boulders lying about the uneven floor of the cave, and to plug the small entrance was the work of a minute. In the meantime several of the dogs, growing bolder and more accustomed to the uncertain light, trotted cautiously ahead to sniff at the walls and about broken rocks.

Suddenly, as the boys prepared to follow, "Old Bandy," a half-bred foxhound belonging to Sim, and the biggest of the pack, broke into a tumultuous howling, in which the whole pack instantly joined, and made the cavern resound with a hideous din.

Gib, with the gun, and Dale and Sim, each with a candle in one hand and club in the other, stepped carefully forward over the stones, and peered into the dark nook beyond the

yelping dogs. They stepped restlessly about in the narrow space with hair on end, and barked furiously at something in front which none of them had the courage to approach.

"It's wildcats!" declared Gib, shouting above the racket. "Scat there! Show your hides, you beasts!"

They were compelled to stoop a little as they neared the end of the cave among the excited dogs. They found a wedge-shaped nook ahead of them, every inch of which the light of the candles fully revealed. Slinking back against the wall, one upon its haunches and the other on all fours, stood two formidable grey wolves, each bigger than Old Bandy!

No wonder the dogs stood back! They were savage-looking brutes, with their bared white fangs and gleaming eyes. No wonder the dogs hesitated!

The hunters looked at each other, and Gib, seeing that the younger ones, although shivering with excitement, did not flinch, levelled his gun. Taking as good aim at the standing wolf as the dim light permitted, he fired.

The gun was loaded heavily with duck shot, and in that close cavern the shock of the report was, as the boys said afterward, like "hammering a thousand anvils all at once."

Gib and Sim stumbled and fell among the pieces of broken rock. Both lights were blown out by the concussion. The darkness was intense and the sulphurous powder smoke was choking. Both wolves and dogs, terrified by the deafening sound, made a rush for the exit of the cave.

One of the animals, a wolf without doubt, sprang against Dale, snapped its teeth in his coat, and knocking him flat, nearly tore the garment from his back in its rush, and made him drop his candle. Sim clung to his "dip," but had no matches, for the small box they had brought had been entrusted to Gib.

The frightened boys arose and stumbled against each other under the low roof. While Gib fumbled for his matches, the boys heard the animals in fierce fight, which had undoubtedly been forced by the wolves. Savage snarls, yelps, and the snapping of teeth told of a scrambling struggle about the

entrance. Doubtless each creature was striving to get out and fighting madly to do so, for the moment heedless of hurts.

Gib finally succeeded in striking a match, and lit the candle which Sim held in trembling fingers. Then Dale's candle was found, bruised but still useful, and by the light of the two the now thoroughly frightened hunters could again see what was going on.

The fight was over, however, between the wolves and dogs, which, thoroughly cowed, had slunk whining and limping to their masters' feet. Over the stone at the entrance stood the two wolves, snarling, defiant, and quite unhurt.

They leaned close together against the rocks, with bristling hair, and turned their ugly muzzles and wicked eyes in savage menace upon the group of hunters. There was no doubting that an attempt to get them away from the entrance to their den would bring a savage attack upon the intruders.

The predicament of the coon-hunters might have quelled stouter hearts than thumped against their ribs. Their dogs were thoroughly whipped and worthless; clubs were useless against such beasts; besides, they could not fight and hold their candles. The gun could be aimed with no certainty in the dim light.

The boys looked at each other with frightened faces; they literally "trembled in their boots." The beaten dogs crouched and cowered around their legs. Fortunately Gib did not entirely lose his courage or presence of mind. He was a genuine backwoodsman, too, in resourcefulness.

"Boys," said he, through his teeth, "those brutes are the biggest kind of timber-wolves, and we've got to down them or they'll down us. I've got about a dozen bullets in my shot-pouch, and I want you two to hold the lights straight while I load up and try again."

To the shivering boys holding candles in nervous fingers, staring alternately at the threatening wolves and at Gib's deliberate preparations, the minutes which followed were filled with horrible suspense. Again and again they were cautioned to hold the candles steady.

The wolves shifted their position only to sniff occasionally at the rock which barred the exit. They seemed to have lost fear, and their savage snarlings grew more threatening as attack upon them was delayed. The contrast between these two bold brutes and the pack of curs whining and licking their hurts among the rocks behind their masters was pitiful.

Gib's first move in loading was to "ram home" a heavy charge of powder, which he covered with a leather wad. He then unscrewed the charger of his shot-pouch and poured the contents into his cap; from these he picked out half a handful of slugs and bullets, ammunition which he had carried in deer-hunting among the Baraboos the winter before. He selected the round bullets and "chambered" nine of them, three at a time.

"Now," said he, "you boys get on your knees behind me. Hold the lights just above my head and put one hand right behind them, so as to throw all the light front and keep them from blowing out. I'll aim across this rock, and see if I can't fetch one of them."

A thrilling moment followed. The cavern was dimly lighted; the young hunter was stretched behind a boulder, with gun levelled across its crown; two white-faced boys knelt behind him and threw the flickering light of their tallow dips over his head. A pack of curs whimpered in the rear. In front not fifteen yards away, still near the wall and close together, stood the wolves, no longer crouching, but as big and as savagely threatening as hunters ever encountered.

Gib aimed carefully. Sim and Dale shut their teeth and braced themselves for the shock. Boom! It seemed as if Coon Rock itself must be shattered by the shock.

But when the ear-splitting clangour subsided, the lights were still burning, and there was no rush or howl of wolves or dogs. A sudden sulphurous quiet was broken only by a muffled scuffling at the far end of the cave. The boys listened breathlessly for a minute; then Gib turned to the others in exultation.

"I've got them both!" he shouted. "Aimed square between them!"

Sure enough, when the smoke had cleared sufficiently for them to see, there lay the two big wolves, limp and harmless, shot dead in their tracks. One had four bullets in its body, and the other had been struck by only one, which, luckily, hit the creature near the eye and penetrated its brain.

The shot was both well calculated and lucky, and when the boys brought home the hides of the big brutes and told their story, their folks were frightened enough at the risk they had run, and glad enough, too, to have the plucky youngsters back alive and sound.

LEFT BEHIND IN THE MOUNTAINS.

BY HENRY ELLIOT THIBADEAU.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.

AFTER graduating from college, I had left my home in Massachusetts to go West as a schoolmaster. After the first month a fire had burned nearly all the new town and destroyed the schoolhouse.

Then I journeyed to Winnipeg, and afterward drifted to Calgary in quest of work. There sharp necessity had forced me to labour as a common "navvy" with pick and shovel on the new Canadian Pacific Railway, then under construction from Calgary to British Columbia.

Here I had had long months of hard, rough life with the turbulent construction gangs. At last we had reached Donald, crossed the Columbia, and entered the stupendous cañons of Roger's Pass and the ravines of the Illicilliwaet.

Passengers who now journey over the line in comfortable railway coaches observe the scenery here not only with admiration, but with a sense of awe; but we, who first cut the way through these wild gorges, felt more than awe—a sense of constant peril and hardship.

After we had laboured for weeks in rain or drenching mists, blasting down the ledges, tunnelling and grading, rheumatic fever, complicated with cerebral meningitis, laid me low. My limbs swelled and stiffened, my pains were agonising. A sick man does not gain much sympathy or attention in a camp of rough navvies. There are always some who think his illness

feigned for the purpose of shirking ; and the kindly disposed are hard-worked, tired labourers, having little time to spend with invalids. As I lay, unable to move, groaning a great deal,—for the slightest jar or motion caused me the keenest anguish,—I of course became an affliction to my mates.

The company's surgeon had been absent for some time, and it is doubtful if he could have done much to benefit me, anyway. At last, when the road-bed was completed to a considerable distance beyond our camp in the lower valley of the pass, the entire gang was moved forward for fifteen or twenty miles.

Here I became delirious, and during my delirium orders had evidently been issued for a farther advance. I knew indistinctly that the men were trying to move me. I must have cried out with such agony and frenzy that at last they despaired, for through my unconsciousness I heard one say, "Well, we've got to leave him, then. I'll get somebody and come back for him to-morrow. Most likely he'll be dead by then, anyway."

When I came to my senses, I found a bucket containing water set near my bunk, a can half-full of porridge and a case of hard biscuit.

I lay in my bunk and looked at a Rocky Mountain marmot which had entered at the open door of the log camp. I think the singularly shrill "whistle" of this odd little animal had roused me. I was still feverish and in terror at the thought of being moved, so racked and swollen were my limbs.

After a time I reached out for the dipper and drank copiously from the bucket. I think that I also attempted to gnaw one of the hard-bread cakes. The delirium probably returned after that, for I came out of a sort of dream that two men were trying to move me.

As a matter of fact, I learned long afterward that no one had ever returned for me. Two of the men who had tried to move me were injured the next day in an accident ; the others, ignorant and brutal half-breeds, were probably too indifferent to return, and possibly the majority of the navvies were unaware for days of my absence. It is wonderful that I was not

attacked by hungry grizzlies or panthers, for the Selkirks were then much infested by these animals.

When consciousness again returned to me I was too weak to move, and lay sleeping or dozing probably for two or three days. Then I contrived to sit up on the edge of my bunk, and I have a pretty clear remembrance of subsequent happenings.

It was now the season when raspberries were ripe, and one of my first excursions outside the door of the camp was to a cluster of raspberry-bushes, where I ate greedily all the berries I could reach. I was still excruciatingly lame and sore, and bent like an old man.

The now deserted camp was situated in the bottom of a great ravine, nearly a mile below the line of railway skirting the mountainside. There were three large shanties, for a hundred men or more, and across the creek, at a distance of perhaps two hundred yards, were two other log camps which had sheltered a gang of lumbermen who had gone ahead of our crew, making trestle-timber.

The larger of their two camps had lost its roof, doors and lighter woodwork by fire; its walls of massive green spruce logs were merely much blackened. Their smaller cabin remained as they had left it. They had cleared a considerable tract of the adjacent forest of its great spruce- and pine-trees.

In the three camps left by our gang I found many odds and ends from the food supplies: a quantity of beans, more than half a barrel of pork, as much corned beef, a box and a half of hard biscuit, a box of matches and numerous other articles.

The bread had, perhaps, been left behind for my benefit, the other stores carelessly, for despite the great expense of conveying provisions into this remote region, there was always a great deal of waste. Broken tools also lay about—axes, bars, shovels, picks, a quantity of cordage and a reel of telegraph-wire.

In such circumstances I began my hermit life. At first it was enforced on me by my crippled condition; but when, some weeks later, I heard at a distance the sledge-hammers of men laying rails for the road, I felt no disposition to hobble up

the mountainside to them, or make my presence known. I knew I had been a great trouble to my mates, and I resolved to avoid human beings until I should be able to work as of old. As none of the trackmen came down to the old camps, my resolution was not tempted to fail.

Of the exceeding loneliness of my life here I shall not attempt to say much, but it was not without its enjoyments. The tremendous mountain scenery, at first so forbiddingly grand, took on in time a more familiar and friendly aspect. Out to the westward, steel-grey peak Sir Donald and the Hermit Mountain towered toward mid-heaven, crowned with eternal snow and ice. How many hours I watched the play of the golden sunset lights on those tremendous rock-pinnacles, while the night purples gathered in the deep sky beyond !

Then the daily movement of wild animal life round my solitary camp was interesting, when I came to observe it attentively : the ever-journeying bears, the shrill-whistling marmots, the eagles wheeling about the high cliffs, the little flocks of brown mountain-sheep, and the white goats, appearing and disappearing fitfully on the bushy ledges above the timber-line. Although no naturalist, I came gradually to note the habits and behaviour of the wild creatures of the mountains, and to find in them diversion, if not companionship.

With squirrel-like instinct, I was moved to lay up a store of berries for winter, from the quantities which loaded the briers around the camps. To preserve these, I picked up about two dozen tin cans which had contained baked beans, peaches, pears, and other canned goods for the foremen and engineers.

After cleansing them and filling them with berries, I replaced the ragged tin tops and soldered them air-tight, while the cans were still hot, with a thick coat of spruce pitch. Odd and clumsy as the device may seem, the berries kept as sweet as if hermetically sealed with the most approved patent cover.

I built a kind of fireplace of stones. I was possessed of a rheumatic sufferer's dread of dampness, and in order to make

the camp dry and warm to sleep in, I frequently cooked my next day's food in the evening—frying pork, boiling corned beef or making unleavened bread.

The firelight, too, cheered my loneliness, and, as I at first imagined, deterred wild beasts from approaching in the night. It did not always produce this effect, however, for a panther often wakened me with its cries. Once it came to the camp door and scratched like a dog. A few nights later it startled me badly by jumping on the roof over my bunk and walking about there, uttering a doleful, moaning note. I threw an old tin bucket across the floor to frighten it, whereupon it leaped down with a sudden, low, gasping breath, and walked stealthily about the cabin for an hour or more.

I made my door fast with props, but I often wished for a gun and ammunition; I had no defensive weapon except an axe and a short stake, in the end of which I had fixed the blade of a broken butcher-knife. In attempting to use this I was nearly killed one night a little later in the summer.

A noise outside the camp had wakened me, and I raised myself in my bunk to listen. It was the tongue of some animal, licking something or other. I heard it for some moments, and then caught a sound, as if the animal were sniffing and pawing over the chips just outside my doorway.

As there was a bright moon and light fell in through the cracks in the door, I rose slowly and crept forward to peep out—at the panther, as I imagined.

But it was something much larger than a panther. Fear stole over me as I peered through the cracks in the door and perceived its huge bulk. I suppose it was a large grizzly bear, or else what is termed a "silvertip" or a "roachback" bear. Certainly it was larger than a black bear and its coat looked silvery grey in the moonlight. It was a huge, ungainly brute, seemingly as heavy as an ox.

After turning over the chips with one great paw, and snuffing meanwhile, it came nearer the door and ran its great muzzle along it, as if trying to gain an idea of what was inside. I felt frightened, for I knew that an animal of that size and weight

could break the door down and easily work its will on me, crippled and unarmed as I was.

I had thoughts of rekindling my fire, but did not like to let the bear hear me moving, for fear it might be suddenly incited to break in. As my knife-stick was set close by the door, I grasped that and stood peeping out through the cracks.

The grizzly, raising one paw, felt the lintel of the door softly at first, then extending his nails, dug at it more forcibly. The door clattered and shook. The beast could evidently pull it down, and I thought I must make haste and do something for myself. Watching my chance, when the beast's nose was close to the door, I jabbed the blade through the crack and yelled loudly.

I hit hard and cut him. The suddenness of the thrust probably startled the animal about as much as it hurt him. He uttered a hideous yelp and instantly struck back with his paw. The next instant I found myself on my back, with the door on top of me and the props flying helter-skelter.

For a moment I thought I was killed. In my crippled condition the shock and the fall hurt my swollen, lame limbs horribly! When I caught my breath—for the edge of the door had struck me near the pit of the stomach—I howled aloud from anguish.

The beast might have walked in and made an end of me had he chosen, but he seemed disconcerted by the noise and outcry; for when I crawled painfully from under the door and raised myself enough to look out, I saw him standing twenty or thirty feet away, with his nose down and his head swinging fitfully to and fro in the moonlight, as if he were trying to work an idea into it.

I was in such pain from my fall that I did not now much care whether the bear attacked me or not, but I crept to the fireplace, struck a match and set some bark and other dry stuff blazing brightly. When I peeped out again, the bear had gone away.

I had not strength left to raise the door, but crawled,

groaning, into my bunk, and was unable to get up again for two days. For many hours I had a high fever and lay in great pain.

Still, I am inclined to believe that I was the better afterward for the tumble and the sudden violent exertions which I made; for after getting about again I was less bent than before, and my limbs were not so stiff. None the less, the medicine had been very harsh.

I proceeded immediately to strengthen my door and rig a heavy bar for it. As it chanced, too, I had not seen the last of my nocturnal visitor.

PART II.

One morning, after I had been living alone in the log camp for six or seven weeks, I saw three black elk walking along the opposite bank of the creek. They were an elk cow, her calf, and a yearling, all ungainly creatures.

They stopped near the partially burned camp of the trestle-makers, and presently began scuffling together over something on the ground. As there was a log bridge over the creek, I crossed, after they had gone away, and found they had been contending over a quantity of rock salt spilled from the pickle of a corned-beef barrel.

They had gnawed the earth out and left a smooth hole where their muzzles and tongues had grubbed up the soakings from the salt. Hoof-prints showed that they had also been within the walls of the old camp, which they had entered by the open doorway.

It did not at first occur to me to profit by their appetite, but I sympathised with their craving, and threw out salt for them from several of the old meat-casks in the other camp. For a week or more I saw these three elk now and then. Once a large bull elk, having antlers, appeared with the others; and having once tasted the salt, they began to resort periodically to the place.

After a time the instinct to hunt, coupled with a growing

hunger for venison, stirred within me, and I began to ponder plans for capturing those elk. As I had no gun, shooting them was out of the question, but I hit upon a scheme for impounding them in the partly burned camp.

I rigged a kind of gate from poles and telegraph-wire, which I suspended from the top log over the doorway in such a manner that I could drop it by pulling a long wire, extending from it across the creek to my camp. Thus I could make a pen or pound of the space within the four blackened walls, which were about nine feet in height. By way of making the pound more secure, I set a top-pole above the walls.

Then I laid trails of salt from the neighbouring ground through the doorway to a plentiful supply inside the enclosure. This completed the contrivance, and, like a spider in his corner, I could watch in my camp for the approach of my intended victims.

I soon observed that the elk, after coming to the salt, seldom returned till the third day following, and I surmised that they had a regular circuit or beat in feeding through the mountains. I usually saw a panther soon after the elk had gone away, from which I conjectured that the big deer, as they moved through their feeding-grounds, were followed by panthers, which probably hoped to take the elk calf in case its dam should permit it to wander far from her side.

I had no desire to capture and slaughter the elk wantonly. Fresh meat was becoming a prime necessity to me, and I wished to test my trap by catching one beast without alarming or harming the others.

At last, one cloudy morning, I saw four of the animals near my trap, and soon two of them went leisurely into the pen. I had my hand on the wire, when they came out, one behind the other, so closely that it was not possible to separate them. But the yearling immediately strolled in alone. Then, with a sharp tug at my wire, I let the gate drop and anxiously waited for what might happen.

The impounded creature rushed about inside the pen, plunged at the gate and bleated repeatedly, but was unable to

get out. The others, now at a little distance, turned and gazed inquiringly toward the spot, yet did not seem alarmed, for there had been no startling noise. As they soon walked away, I hobbled over to the old camp and inspected my vigorous prisoner through the cracks in the trap-door.

How to make venison of the animal was something of a problem for me, as I was still much crippled, and, moreover, felt like a beast of prey in planning for the death of the ensnared creature. But hunger, I reasoned, justified me, and the reflection that nearly all human beings subsist upon their weaker fellow animals.

During the day I contrived to toss a slip-noose of rope about the young elk's neck. Against this it pulled till it fell down, and then I used my pole-knife. There were probably two hundred pounds of the meat, about half of which I laid down in salt in one of the beef-barrels. Almost immediately after beginning to live on the broiled and stewed fresh venison I found my strength increasing.

A while afterward, in September, I succeeded in impounding the elk calf in the same way, but before this the offal from my butcher work attracted a number of bears to the neighbourhood of the pound. Among these visitors I thought I saw the same large grey bear that had called at my camp earlier in the summer.

The night after I impounded the elk calf, bears came in force. Hearing hideous outcries, accompanied by savage growls, I looked out and saw the forms of at least three bears quarrelling over the head and other refuse meat.

The ugly brutes soon appeared to have scented the venison which I had hung up over the roof of the smaller camp in which I lived, but they were as yet contented with the offal. The next night, however, they crossed the creek, and I heard them shuffling around outside. By shouting and thrusting out firebrands I contrived to frighten them away, for it is far from pleasant to hear grizzlies, weighing perhaps half a ton each, snuffing at one's door in the dead hours of night.

Although my health had improved, I was still stiff in my

joints, and could not walk for even fifty yards without pain. But my courage had risen, and before long I began to revolve plans for entrapping the bears.

Night after night, after barricading my door, I lay pondering projects for bringing them to grief. Finally I determined to entice them into the smaller log camp across the creek by baiting it with the offal of the elk.

This small camp, which stood about two hundred feet from the larger, was a strong structure fifteen by twenty feet on the ground, built of Douglas fir and cedar logs from a foot to fifteen inches in diameter. It was roofed with poles, covered with dry fir boughs, and had a door of hewn plank, strongly cleated.

I took the door off its hinges and set it within between two posts, one on each side of the doorway, so that it could be hoisted up and let drop, like a gate in a water-slucice. For dropping it, I rigged a button with a wire extending back overhead to the other end of the camp.

In doing all this I spent a whole week, for I could work but little as yet. Almost every stroke with the axe put me to pain, and I was obliged to rest often; but I persisted till I had the door so strong that I felt sure no living creature smaller than an elephant could tear it out.

When it was ready for setting I scattered fresh bones about the doorway, and at the farther side of the camp attached a fore quarter of my venison to the wire in such a way that a tug at it would let the trap-gate drop. From my camp across the creek I could see the door of the bear-trap, and know whether it was sprung or not.

On the second night after baiting the new trap, I heard bears snuffing about it, and early next morning saw that the door had fallen. Arming myself with my pole-knife and an axe, I crossed the log bridge in considerable excitement. Had I caught a bear or a panther? I feared it might be nothing larger than a wildcat or a marten.

Near the trap I listened for some time. There was no sound from inside. I stole up and peeped in at a crack beside the door. The camp seemed empty, and I supposed the gate

had fallen accidentally. But just then I made out a large dark mass in one corner, and presently caught the wicked, green light of a pair of eyes.

As I could not make sure what sort of beast it was, I went round to a little square hole left for a window on the south side, which I had stopped with a bit of log. Removing this, I looked in. No sooner had my face appeared than a roar caused me to jump backward in haste.

The bear was in there—no mistake about that! He had been lying quiet, not so much from fear, probably, as from sullenness or shame at having been trapped. His growl seemed to say, "Just let me get a paw on you and I'll teach you better manners than to play tricks with me!" It was a large "silvertip" bear, but not such a monster as the one that had knocked my camp door down in August.

I had caught my bear, but what to do with him was a problem. The best scheme I could think of was to get on the roof of the camp with a line, make a hole through the poles, and attempt to drop a slip-noose over the bear's head. If I could do that, I might be able to choke him.

Accordingly I went back to my camp for the rope I had used to lasso the elk, and then clambered upon the roof of the camp-trap, while the bear growled in such a frightful manner below me that I did not at all like my plan. But I could think of nothing better. After I had crawled up near the ridge-pole and opened a hole three or four feet square, I attempted to lasso the animal.

There may have been other beasts as furious as that silvertip became, but I never saw one of them. He struck the noose aside with his paw, roared at me in a blood-curdling manner and tried to climb the walls. But I was out of his reach and continued casting the noose.

At last, as if in disdain of me, the great creature sat down in one corner and let me throw the line, making no effort to ward it off. By a lucky cast I flung the noose over his head, jerked it tight and held fast. I had taken what I thought the precaution of tying the other end of the rope to the ridge-pole.

Then the battle began. The bear no sooner felt the rope tighten on his throat than he reared up, brought his paws against the line and leaped to the other side of the camp. The rope was jerked violently out of my grasp, and I fell face downward upon the roof. The bear wheeled, seemed to tangle himself in the line, and brought his whole weight to bear on it. Instantly I heard a loud crack and felt the ridge-pole settle down.

At that I forgot my rheumatism and jumped handsomely to get off the roof, but I was too late. It went down in a heap, and I with it, right on top of the bear. There were only a few bits of pole and rotten brush between us.

What a roar that brute let out then ! I think I yelled, too—all I could. No doubt he was alarmed, but alarm is no name for my terror. He clawed wildly to get from under the ruins, but he was not quick enough to keep me from clambering out over the log wall of the camp.

I hardly know how I did it, but in less than five seconds I was outside, heading for the bridge. I didn't stop to hobble, either, for I heard a frightful snort just as I dropped to the ground, and caught a glimpse of the bear going over the top log of the camp wall dragging a piece of the ridge-pole by the rope around his neck.

Till then I had not fully straightened my legs and back since I was crippled, but I braced up and ran the two hundred yards to my camp at top speed. The silvertip did not follow me, however. He took to the woods, and I never saw anything further of him.

No sooner had I gained my camp door than I was seized with such pains in my limbs and about my joints that I thought I should surely expire. Fever returned, and throughout that entire day my suffering was great. I feared a long relapse, but the pain and fever subsided during the night, and I was much better the next morning. Now I could stand erect and walk without hobbling.

While twisting about in the night I thought that I would never more trouble the bears, but after I found myself better

my ideas began to run upon trapping them again. The main difficulty, I had now learned, was not so much to catch a bear as to deal with him afterwards.

I cleared out the old camp, cut new poles and replaced the roof. Then I chopped a hole through one side of the log wall, cutting a short piece out of one large log, and leaving an aperture two feet long by about fifteen inches high. Through this a captive bear could thrust his head.

Next I set a post a little to one side of the hole, on the outside of the camp, but close up to the log wall: indeed, I chopped into the wall and set it partly into the logs. To this post I attached a long, heavy lever by a wooden pin near the top end of it, so that the lever could be worked horizontally up and down like a pump-brake.

I mortised holes in the under side of this lever for inserting the heads of three old axes so that the blades would project downward. My idea was to provoke some captive bear into thrusting out his head to seize me. Then I would shut the lever down across his neck, catching it between the bottom log and the axe blades.

By throwing my entire weight upon the long arm of the lever I expected to be able either to behead the bear or speedily choke him to death. I estimated that I could easily bring a weight of a ton to bear on those axe blades.

In rigging this device I spent the better part of a week, and I do not think that I ever felt more confident of the success of anything; but I had still much to learn concerning grizzly bears, and my progress in this portion of my education was wonderfully rapid a few nights later.

PART III.

The "knife" of my bear-trap was something like that of an old-fashioned hay-cutter, such as was worked by a lever. It was designed to behead the grizzly, which could not see the axe-blade, and hence would not be likely to dodge back when I jumped on the lever.

As it chanced, my trap was sprung several times by smaller animals, and once by a wolf that escaped by digging its way out beneath one of the bottom logs of the camp. Three nights later I was awakened by a terrible roaring, and at once felt certain that there was a big bear in the pound.

I did not stir forth till daylight, for I had no desire to attempt to guillotine a bear in the dark. Then my conjecture that I had caught a very savage old veteran was fully verified. This bear was at least a third larger than the first one I had trapped.

Something familiar in his ponderous shape and the tint of his coat made me believe it was the same beast that had knocked my cabin door down in August, and I fancied that I could see a scar on his nose where I had cut him with the knife-stick. Unlike the other one, this bear roared and growled almost continuously.

I walked with caution round the trap, gaining such glimpses as I could without approaching too close; for the rage of such a monstrous beast is terrifying. I knew that if he broke out he would kill me with one stroke of his paw, and that it would be impossible to escape by running, for, clumsy as these animals appear, they can move more rapidly than a man over open ground.

The margins of the hole which I had cut at the rear end of the camp seemed rubbed and torn, as if the bear's head had been out and in there often during the night. Hoping to see it come forth again, I approached and tried the workings of the lever gently.

"I will soon alter the tone of your roar, old fellow!" I muttered, as I put the lever in position. The beast heard me, and in an instant out popped his ugly head, roaring, frothing and foaming—the incarnation of savage rage.

Collecting all my strength, I jumped on the lever, threw my whole weight on the end of it, and caught the grizzly with the axe-blades just back of his ears.

When he felt those blades, he roared and pulled back. I think he was scared. The whole camp shook; but I jumped the harder, and kept my weight on the lever.

The animal realised that he must exert all his strength. So he set his feet against the logs inside, and gave first a twist and then a mighty upward boost. Then I saw the whole side of the camp coming out upon me. A span of heavy draft-horses could not have pulled the end away as easily as the bear pushed it out.

I jumped off the lever and ran round the corner, where there was a short log standing up against the wall of the camp. With a spring and a scramble I mounted to the roof—what there was left of it, for the farther end had fallen in. I had hardly reached it when the bear jumped out at the collapsed end of the camp, shaking his head.

I expected that the maddened beast would charge at me, but I do not think he could have seen me, for he ran off a few steps and faced round with a grunt. His neck was bleeding somewhat.

For some moments he stood looking at the camp and puffing. Perhaps if I had stirred he would have charged at me, but he continued shaking his head angrily, as if the cuts pained him, for perhaps half a minute, then suddenly wheeled about and went off at a shambling run.

I felt chagrined at this result. It seemed that I had been much mistaken in crediting myself with skill in trapping grizzlies.

That was the last I saw or heard of the bears that fall. The cold season was at hand, and I suppose they went into winter quarters.

Now I battened my camp thickly with cedar and fir boughs, prepared a great pile of fire-wood by chopping up one of the log camps, and entered upon the winter comfortably. In that great ravine, hedged about with the huge spruces and firs of the evergreen forest, my cabin was well sheltered from storms.

Eight or ten inches of snow soon fell, and the weather became very cold. A species of mink then began to frequent the creek, swimming in the open pools, and I busied myself with efforts to trap them in small "deadfalls." Having caught

four with much difficulty, I stretched their skins after the manner I had heard trappers describe.

A singular black-and-white creature, which made its appearance at about this time, entered the deserted camps across the creek nearly every night for a week. Its tracks were as large as the palm of a man's hand. I repaired the smaller camp in which I had entrapped the bears, and succeeded in catching the animal a little before sunrise one morning.

It immediately began digging furiously beneath the sills, or bottom logs, of the camp, and would have escaped in a short time if I had not struck it senseless with a club when it thrust out its head. It was a wolverene, I have been told, and it weighed perhaps thirty-five pounds.

I saw the tracks of many martens in the green timber on the sides of the mountain to the south of the ravine, and caught two in deadfalls similar to those which I set for mink.

Elk ran past occasionally, and panthers' tracks were numerous. I also heard wolves howling at night, and one day I saw six of them coursing at speed down the ravine—ugly, gaunt, grey brutes that looked dangerous.

Before the middle of the month of January no more than a foot of snow fell. One could move about without much difficulty, and with the interest of trapping I had passed the time unoppressed by the solitude. But now came a prodigious snowfall of more than four feet during forty-eight hours.

The sun then broke forth and shone warmly for half a day, but the sky soon darkened again; and during the following night and day about two feet more of snow fell. Then I had a clear day, followed by two days more of snow. It was light, and came above the eaves of my camp on all sides. To move abroad was impossible, and it cost me two hours of hard work to shovel a road to my wood-pile. As I had never before seen such a snowfall, I was somewhat alarmed.

Indeed, there was good cause for alarm. While trying to cook my breakfast in the darkened cabin, I heard from a

distance a noise which I at first mistook for that of a train on the railroad, but on reflection I felt sure that no train could be in motion that morning. The noise continued for a few moments before I reflected that it must be the sound of an avalanche.

Not long afterward I heard another such roar, and during the day a great many. All were distant, some so far off among the mountains that they sounded like faint thunder.

The weather continued dark and cloudy, but grew much warmer. I had been asleep one night for several hours, when I was roused suddenly by a rumbling noise. Instantly I sprang to my feet and ran to the door of my cabin. The noise grew constantly louder.

When I pulled open the door the dark clouds were breaking away, and the moon shone out on the vast white mountain-side opposite. That whole mountain-side seemed to be in confused motion—gliding, twisting, rushing down!

A vast spray of snow flew up from it. Mingled with this white snow-surf were black objects, rocks and the trunks and broken tops of trees, whirling out into sight for an instant amidst the snow. The noise was like one continuous, jarring thunder-peal close at hand, and I felt the very earth tremble as the vast, writhing mass rushed to the foot of the mountain.

It did not stop there. I saw what seemed to be an enormous tossing drift heave up into view nearer at hand. It seemed to cross the intervening space and come to my cabin in one second, rustling, crackling, hurling itself over my wood-pile and paths, gushing in at the door, and half filling my cabin with mingled snow and broken boughs.

The awful jar started another avalanche from the mountain on the other side of the ravine, a few hundred yards farther to the west. This one I heard, but could not see.

The snow and brush from the avalanche were difficult to clear away, and I was occupied for two days cutting a passage through it to my wood-pile. Rain came, then the weather turned colder, and the snow from the avalanche froze hard enough to bear my weight. Then I discovered that the last

slide had blockaded the creek-bed a little way above my cabin to a depth of sixty or seventy feet.

Toward evening, hearing loud snarls in that quarter, I climbed over the mass of broken trees and hard, lumpy snow, and saw four wolves, snapping and fighting over some half-buried object. Watching them a little way off, a mountain-lion lay crouched on an uptilted tree-trunk.

Taking my axe, and swinging round my head a long brand from my fireplace, I drove the wolves away. The panther also made off up the ravine. Then I saw that the wolves had been attempting to drag out a dead animal nearly as large as a deer, with a white coat of long hair and upright black horns. I suppose it was a mountain-goat that had come down the mountains in the avalanche. Cutting about it with my axe, I pulled it out of the frozen snow. As the flesh, although frozen, appeared to be in good condition, I carried about sixty pounds of it to my camp.

Going up to the place on the following day to see if the wolves had returned to devour the carcass, I heard a singular sound from the hard, lumpy snow under my feet. It was not unlike the bleat of a sheep.

Again I brought my axe and shovel into use. After digging to a depth of seven or eight feet, I opened a kind of irregular cavity, formed by broken trees and brush. In this there was a young goat, evidently a kid of the previous spring.

The poor little creature had been roughly handled by the snowslide. One of its forelegs was broken, and it had received several wounds and bruises. To appease its hunger it had gnawed deep into two or three pine and fir logs.

When I first opened the cavity to the sunlight, the poor kid seemed bewildered or blinded; and so weak had it become that it offered little resistance when I drew it up from the hole. Its situation there was what my own would probably have been had the slide come off the mountain a few hundred feet farther down the ravine.

I carried the forlorn little beast to my camp, set the bone of its leg with splints, dosed it, built a warm pen for it inside

the camp, and brought for fodder bunches of the smallest, juiciest twigs and brush that I could find. Such a pet must needs have a name, and I named my little goat 'Rastus.

In the course of a fortnight he began to hobble about. The mended foreleg proved shorter than the other, and somewhat crooked. Still, 'Rastus found it better than no leg, and he never complained of it, to my knowledge.

I was well repaid by his company for my trouble and labour in foraging for him. Perhaps I attributed greater intelligence to him than he possessed,—people constantly do that in the case of pets,—but I really think that 'Rastus understood the condition of affairs at our camp. He became wholly tame as regarded my presence, and ran out and in as he pleased.

It was a great comfort to me to hear him chewing his cud at night, after I had gone to bed. His habit was to lie down close to my bunk, for he was an arrant coward. Perhaps he scented mountain-lions; at any rate, he would not set foot outside the camp after dusk fell.

The spring gradually drew on. I had lost count of the days and weeks, but toward the end of March a great thaw set in. The snow settled and melted rapidly. Rain fell for a day and a night, so heavily that I became uneasy about the blocked-up condition of the creek above my camp, where the snowslide had come into the ravine.

As soon as it was light the next morning I went up there to look at it, and I went none too soon. For I saw an immense accumulation of water, yellow with floating snow and ice, dammed up and on the very point of overflowing and guttering its way through the snowslide.

I ran back to my camp in haste, gathered up my peltries, old coats and some other articles, and carried them across the log bridge of the creek and a considerable distance up the other side of the mountain.

Although I was gone but ten or fifteen minutes, I found so much water rushing under and even over the bridge when I returned that I dared not cross to the camp again. Even

while I stood looking at it in dismay, the whole pent-up flood broke loose with an awful roar, and went rushing down the ravine.

It was only by rushing back to the higher ground that I escaped drowning. My camp, with everything in and about it,—including poor 'Rastus,—was overwhelmed and swept away in a moment.

While I stood there, quite dumbfounded by the catastrophe, I heard the distant whistle of a passing train. Previously the train whistles had awakened no desire in me to go forth into the world, but this one came to my ear like a summons to join in the affairs of men once more. I determined to be a hermit no longer.

Taking my furs, I ascended to the railway-track, and walked on it for six miles to Summit Station. From this point the hands of a freight-train going west good-naturedly took me with them to Vancouver. They jocosely christened me "the old man of the mountains"—and, indeed, I had become a very odd, Rip Van Winkle sort of a person, with hair hanging thickly about my shoulders.

At Vancouver I sold my furs for enough to pay a barber, purchase a modest outfit of clothing, and buy a meal ticket at a boarding-house. That was many years ago; and there have been times since, when the battle of life was going against me, that made me wish myself back in the sylvan peace and quiet of my old log camp in the great ravine of the Illicilliwaet.

A BLESSING IN DISGUISE.

BY ALFRED H. MILES.

THERE is an old and familiar proverb which declares that "many hands make light work," and no better illustration of its truth could be given than that supplied by the tiny workers of the insect world, who, while being without hands in the ordinary sense, have a way of making their whole bodies uncommonly handy.

Of course, order and organisation have to regulate the operation of numbers, or the many hands would only make "confusion worse confounded"; but none know this better than "Solomon's little people," the ants and the locusts, to say nothing of the bees.

The marvellous manner in which the ants organise and carry out their campaigns is a never-ceasing wonder to those who, many million times their size and endowed with human intelligence, may yet well follow Solomon's advice and "consider their ways and be wise."

Mrs. Carmichael in her work on the West Indies gives the following account of a visitation she experienced while there, a visitation which Europeans might perhaps be pardoned for regarding as a plague, but which the natives with a truer insight regard as "the blessing of God."

"One morning my attention was arrested at Laurel Hill by an unusual number of black birds, whose appearance was foreign to me; they were smaller, but not unlike an English crow, and were perched on a calibash tree near the kitchen. I asked D., who at that moment came up from the garden, what could be the cause of the appearance of so many of those

black birds. She said, 'Misses, dem be a sign of the blessing of God ; dey are not de blessing, but only de sign as we say, of God's blessing. Misses, you'll see afore noon time how the ants will come and clear the houses.' At this moment I was called to breakfast, and thinking it was some superstitious idea of D.'s, I paid no further attention to it. In about two hours after this, I observed an uncommon number of *chasseur-ants* crawling about the floor of the room : my children were annoyed by them, and seated themselves on a table where their legs did not communicate with the floor. They did not crawl upon my person, but I was now surrounded by them. Shortly after this, the walls of the room became covered by them ; and next they began to take possession of the tables and chairs. I now thought it necessary to take refuge in an adjoining room, separated only by a few ascending steps from the one we occupied ; and this was not accomplished without great care and generalship ; for had we trodden upon one, we should have been summarily punished. There were several ants on the step of the stair, but they were not nearly so numerous as in the room we had left ; but the upper room presented a singular spectacle, for not only were the floor and the walls covered like the other room, but the roof was covered also.

"The open rafters of a West India house at all times afford shelter to a numerous tribe of insects, more particularly the cockroach ; but now their destruction was inevitable. The *chasseur-ants*, as if trained for battle, ascended in regular thick files to the rafters, and threw down the cockroaches to their comrades on the floor, who as regularly marched off with the dead bodies of cockroaches, dragging them away by their united efforts with amazing rapidity. Either the cockroaches were stung to death on the rafters, or else the fall killed them. The ants never stopped to devour their prey, but conveyed it all to their storehouse. The windward windows of this room were glass, and a battle now ensued between the ants and the jack-spaniards, on the panes of glass. The jack-spaniard may be called the wasp of the West Indies ; it is twice as large as

a British wasp, and its sting is in proportion more painful. It builds its nest in trees and old houses, and sometimes in the rafters of a room. The jack-spaniards were not quite such easy prey, for they used their wings, which not one cockroach had attempted. Two jack-spaniards, hotly pursued on the window, alighted on the dress of one of my children. I entreated her to sit still, and remain quiet. In an almost inconceivably short space of time, a party of ants crawled upon her frock, surrounded, covered the two jack-spaniards, and crawled down again to the floor, dragging off their prey, and doing the child no harm.

“From this room I went to the adjoining bedchamber and dressing-room, and found them equally in possession of the chasseurs. I opened a large military chest full of linens, which had been much infested ; for I was determined to take every advantage of such able hunters. I found the ants already inside : I suppose they must have got in at some opening at the hinges. I pulled out the linens on the floor, and with them hundreds of cockroaches, not one of which escaped.

“We now left the house, and went to the chambers built at a little distance ; but these also were in the same state. I next proceeded to open a storeroom at the end of the other house, for a place of retreat ; but, to get the key, I had to return to the under room, where the battle was now more hot than ever ; the ants had commenced an attack upon the rats and mice ; and, strange as it may appear, these were no match for their apparently insignificant foes. They surrounded them (as they had the insect tribe), covered them over, and dragged them off with a celerity and union of strength that no one who has not watched such a scene can comprehend. I did not see one mouse or rat escape, and I am sure I saw a score carried off during a very short period. We next tried the kitchen ; for the storeroom and boys’ pantry were already occupied ; but the kitchen was equally the field of battle between rats, mice, cockroaches, and ants killing them. A huckster negro came up selling cakes, and seeing the uproar, and the family and

servants standing out in the sun, he said, ' Ah, misses, you've got the blessing of God to-day, and a great blessing it be to get such a cleaning.' I think it was about ten when I first observed the ants ; about twelve, the battle was formidable ; soon after one o'clock, the great strife began with the rats and mice ; and about three, the houses were cleared. In a quarter of an hour more, the ants began to decamp, and soon not one was to be seen within doors. But the grass round the house was full of them ; and they seemed now feasting on the remnants of their prey, which had been left on the road to their nests ; and so the feasting continued till about four o'clock, when the black birds, who had never been long absent from the calibash and pois-doux trees in the neighbourhood, darted down among them, and destroyed by millions those who were too sluggish to make good their retreat. By five o'clock, the whole was over ; before sun-dawn, the negro houses were also cleared out in the same way ; and they told me they had seen the black birds hovering about the almond-trees, close to the negro houses, as early as seven in the morning. I never saw those black birds before or since, and the negroes assured me that they never were seen but at such times."







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